Foreign
Broadcast
Information
Service
50
ANNIVERSARY
1941 - 1991

Daily Report

Soviet Union

FBIS-SOV-91-240
Friday
13 December 1991

Daily Report
Soviet Union

FBIS-SOV-91-240 CONTENTS *13 December 1991*

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

NOTICE TO READERS: The United States Government recognizes the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Arms Control & Disarmament

Nuclear Treaties To Apply to All Republics *[TASS]* 1
Primakov Insists Nuclear Weapons 'Secure' *[TASS]* 1
Control of Nuclear Arms 'Not Clear' to West *[IZVESTIYA 12 Dec]* 1

Worldwide Issues

Text of Commonwealth Agreement Sent to UN *[TASS]* 2
Islamic Meeting Admits Azerbaijan to Membership *[IZVESTIYA 10 Dec]* 2
KAL 'Black Box' Capabilities Detailed *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 10 Dec]* 3

United States & Canada

Gates: Union 'Unstable to a Dangerous Degree' *[IZVESTIYA 12 Dec]* 4
Little Change Seen in U.S. Asian Policy *[PRAVDA 30 Nov]* 5

Northeast Asia

Union Disintegration Causing Japan 'Concern' *[TASS]* 7
South Korean Indecision Over Aid Reported *[IZVESTIYA 6 Dec]* 7
South Korea To Be Most-Favored Nation *[Moscow International]* 7
North, South Korea 'Closer Than Ever Before' *[Moscow International]* 8
China Will Not Help Develop DPRK Arms *[Moscow International]* 8

Near East & South Asia

India Considers Ties With Ex-Union Republics *[INTERFAX]* 9

East Europe

Gorbachev CSFR Visit in December Cancelled *[TASS]* 9
Envoys Deliver Address to Serbian President *[TASS]* 9
Prague Reaction to Minsk Accord Reported *[TRUD 11 Dec]* 9
Poland's Balcerowicz Postpones Visit to Moscow *[TASS]* 10
Volskiy's Union Signs Agreement With Hungary *[IZVESTIYA 9 Dec]* 10

West Europe

Shevardnadze, Genscher Discuss Brest Accord *[TASS]* 10
Silayev on EC Offer of ECU 500 Million *[INTERFAX]* 10
    Further on EC Aid *[Moscow TV]* 11
    Europarliament Suspends Aid *[TASS]* 11
EC Defers Decision on Next Tranche of Loan *[IZVESTIYA 7 Dec]* 11

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Congress of People's Deputies

Legislative Discussion Focuses on Commonwealth 12
  Signatures Collected for Congress *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 11 Dec]* 12
  'Important Milestone' in Dialogue *[TASS]* 12

Supreme Soviet

Nationalities Council Delays Debate *[TASS]* 12
  'Keen Discussion' Takes Place *[TASS]* 13
Gorbachev Issues Statement on Deputies' Recall *[TASS]* 13
Chairman Says Soviet of Republics 'New Body' *[Alma-Ata Radio]* 14
Commonwealth Described as 'Wishful Thinking' *[TASS]* 14
Deputy Says Legislature 'Virtually' Ceases *[Radio Rossii]* 14

Political & Social

Gorbachev Holds News Conference on Events *[Moscow TV]* 14
Presidential Spokesman on Gorbachev Actions 19
  Message to Muslim Republics Denied *[Moscow Radio]* 19
  Gorbachev To Work 'Hand in Hand' *[Tokyo TV]* 19
Further Reaction to Commonwealth Accords 19
  Fate of Shevardnadze, Ministry *[INTERFAX]* 19
  Adviser on Legal Aspects *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 12 Dec]* 19
  'Last Hope' Out of 'Quagmire' *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 12 Dec]* 20
  'Third Force' Envisioned *[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA 12 Dec]* 21
  Alksnis Suggests Gorbachev Emigrate *[INTERFAX]* 22
Concerns With Guarding of Borders Addressed 22
  Committee Established *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 7 Dec]* 22
  Situation Observed *[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA 11 Dec]* 23
New Justice Party Established, Aims Viewed *[PRAVDA 7 Dec]* 23
Party Appeals to Gorbachev To Intervene *[Radio Rossii]* 23
Ministry Accounts To Be 'Temporarily Reopened' *[INTERFAX]* 24
Deputy Comments on Georgian, Chechen Leaders *[TASS]* 24
TASS Carries Press Review for 13 Dec 24

Military

Manilov Interviewed on Fate of Armed Forces *[Moscow TV]* 25
Lobov Dismissal, Declaration Viewed *[PRAVDA 13 Dec]* 26
  Lobov Situation Examined *[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA 10 Dec]* 27
New Chief of Army General Staff Profiled *[IZVESTIYA 10 Dec]* 27
Ministry Confirms Chernavin Still in Command *[TASS]* 28
'Difficult Situation' Affects Planned Maneuvers 28
  Tactical Exercises Cut *[TASS]* 28
  Forces Fail Combat Training *[POSTFACTUM]* 28
  Naval Exercises Still Forecast *[POSTFACTUM]* 28
'Time to Acknowledge' Military Intelligence *[IZVESTIYA 10 Dec]* 28
Poll Shows Majority Favor Professional Army *[IZVESTIYA 6 Dec]* 29
Poll Conducted on Reduction in Red Army Forces *[INTERFAX]* 30
Cruisers Sold Abroad For Scrap Confirmed *[Moscow Radio]* 30
Proposals Forwarded by Ministry Commission Viewed *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 6 Dec]* 31
Panel Set Up To Dismantle Komsomol Structures *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 6 Dec]* 31
Impact of Amnesty Law for Deserters Assessed *[IZVESTIYA 6 Dec]* 31

BALTIC COUNTRIES

Baltic Affairs

Armed Forces Representatives Invited to Seminar *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 12 Dec]* 33
Troops To Withdraw From Baltics 'After 1994' *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 11 Dec]* 33

Estonia

Note to Soviet Ministry on Minorities Sent *[TASS]* 33
Bank Signs Agreement With USSR State Bank *[Tallinn Radio]* 33
Commercial Banks Forced To Sell Hard Currency *[BALTFAX]* 33
U.S. Official Warns Not To Delay Reforms *[BALTFAX]* 34
Visa Required for Travel Between Baltics, Russia *[BALTFAX]* 34

Latvia

Gorbunovs Congratulates Commonwealth Leaders *[Riga Radio]* 34
Godmanis Speaks on Resolution on Food Prices *[Riga Radio]* 34
Leaders Not To Attend USSR Supreme Soviet *[Riga Radio]* 36
Milk, Meat Facilities Under Armed Guard *[BALTFAX]* 36
OMON Commander Arrested With Russia's Help *[BALTFAX]* 36
Defense Minister Denies Threat of Coup *[BALTFAX]* 36

Lithuania

Vagnorius Congratulates Yeltsin on Commonwealth *[Vilnius Radio]* 37
Vagnorius Comments on Impact of Commonwealth *[Vilnius Radio]* 37
Country 'Does Not Plan To Join' Commonwealth *[BALTFAX]* 37
Shevardnadze Replaced as Head of Delegation *[BALTFAX]* 37
R8 Million in Food Aid Dispatched to Moscow *[Vilnius Radio]* 37
Five From 'Armed Underground' Elements Held *[BALTFAX]* 37

RSFSR

Supreme Soviet

Leaders Brief Deputies on Minsk Accord *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 12 Dec]* 39
    Yeltsin Comments on Amendments *[Russian TV]* 39
    Khasbulatov Addresses Deputies *[Russian TV]* 39
    Kozyrev Answers Questions *[Russian TV]* 40
    St Petersburg Mayor Comments *[Russian TV]* 41
    Travkin Supports Agreement *[Russian TV]* 42
    Baburin on 'Inactive Center' *[Russian TV]* 42
    Volkogonov on 'Wise' Decision *[Russian TV]* 43
    Burbulis on Union Treaty *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 12 Dec]* 43
    USSR Supreme Soviet Membership Noted *[Russian TV]* 44
    Russian Deputies Recalled *[Radio Rossii]* 45
Yeltsin Urges Decision on USSR State Bank *[Moscow Radio]* 45
Deputies Adopt Law on Document Registration *[TASS]* 45
    Agree To Defer Minimum Wage Law *[IZVESTIYA 9 Dec]* 45
    Debate Money Transfers *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 11 Dec]* 45
    Debate Fate of Buildings *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 11 Dec]* 46

Interrepublic Affairs

Adviser Warns of Ukraine Leaving Commonwealth *[TASS]* 46
Yeltsin 'Confidant' on Gorbachev Resignation *[Budapest TV]* 46
Sobchak: Commonwealth 'Enormous Step Forward' *[Moscow TV]* 46
Official on East Europe Joining Commonwealth *[INTERFAX]* 47
Khasbulatov Grants Interview on Commonwealth *[Russian TV]* 47
    Further on Khasbulatov Comments *[Russian TV]* 49

Rutskoy Criticizes 'Ambiguities' in Accord *[TASS]* ... 51
Kozyrev on Commonwealth, USSR UN Membership *[TASS]* ... 52
Political Youth Leaders Oppose Minsk Agreement *[TASS]* ... 52
Yeltsin Receives Moldovan President Snegur *[TASS]* ... 52
  Congratulates Snegur on Election *[INTERFAX]* ... 52
  Discusses Commonwealth Membership *[Moscow TV]* ... 53
  Signs Communique With Snegur *[Bucharest ROMPRES]* ... 53
Georgian Agreement Depends on South Ossetia *[IZVESTIYA 13 Dec]* ... 53

Federation Affairs

Yeltsin Meets Party Leaders, Predicts Unrest *[Radio Rossii]* ... 53
Government To Maintain Contact With Republics *[INTERFAX]* ... 54
Foreign Ministry on Gorbachev Aide Criticism *[INTERFAX]* ... 54
Defense Budget Estimated at R323.5 Billion *[INTERFAX]* ... 54
Yeltsin on Stance Toward Paying USSR's Debts *[INTERFAX]* ... 54
Government Sets Up Nuclear Monitoring Process *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 4 Dec]* ... 55
'Democratic Russia's' Ponomarev Interviewed *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 11 Dec]* ... 55
  Travkin Addresses DPR Congress *[SOVETSKAYA GAZETA 10 Dec]* ... 56
Poll on Government Improving Living Standards *[INTERFAX]* ... 57
Decree Gives Definition of 'Commercial Secret' *[INTERFAX]* ... 57
Zhirinovskiy Press Conference Reported *[IZVESTIYA 6 Dec]* ... 58
Delay Over Military Conversion Viewed *[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA 6 Dec]* ... 58

International Affairs

Honecker To Be Deported to FRG 13 Dec *[IZVESTIYA 12 Dec]* ... 60
  Says He Was 'Politically Persecuted' *[Berlin ADN]* ... 60
  'Guest' of Chilean Envoy in Moscow *[TASS]* ... 60
Khasbulatov Visits ROK, Meets No Tae-u *[TASS]* ... 60
  Comments Upon Return *[Moscow International]* ... 61
Parliamentary Group Received by China's Wan Li *[TASS]* ... 61
  Parliamentarians End Visit *[TASS]* ... 61
Burbulis Visits France, Meets With Mitterrand *[TASS]* ... 62
  Comments on Results of Visit *[TASS]* ... 62
St Petersburg Mayor in Paris for Food Aid *[TRUD 5 Dec]* ... 63
  Visits Sweden, Secures Aid *[Stockholm DAGENS NYHETER 5 Dec]* ... 63
  Holds Press Conference in Finland *[TASS]* ... 63

Regional Affairs

Dudayev Decree on Subordinating Armed Groups *[TASS]* ... 64
Regions Not Honoring Food Contracts With Moscow *[Moscow Radio]* ... 64
Moscow Mayor on Privatization Decision *[IZVESTIYA 7 Dec]* ... 65
  Calls for Immediate Privatization *[TASS]* ... 65
Moscow Presidium Decision on Military Units *[Radio Rossii]* ... 65
Novgorod Nuclear Station's Future Resolved *[Radio Rossii]* ... 65
UN Rejects St Petersburg Free Economic Zone *[INTERFAX]* ... 65
Tatar President Supports Nonethnic Commonwealth *[TASS]* ... 65
Economic Agreement Reached With Tatarstan *[IZVESTIYA 10 Dec]* ... 66

WESTERN REPUBLICS

Belarus

Supreme Soviet Briefed on Commonwealth *[PRAVDA 11 Dec]* ... 67
Shushkevich: Nazarbayev Ready For Commonwealth *[IZVESTIYA 13 Dec]* ... 67
Coupons To Replace Ruble 1 January *[TASS]* ... 67

Moldova

Clash on Dubossary Bridge Leaves Dead, Wounded *[Moscow Radio]* 67
  Dnestr Charges 'Invasion' by Police *[TASS]* 67
  'Massive Intrusion' Alleged *[Moscow Radio]* 68
  Dnestr Troops Sent to Dubossary *[TASS]* 68
  Snegur Cuts Short Trip to Russia *[TASS]* 68
Ministry Statement on Dnestr Attacks on Police *[Kishinev Radio]* 68
Dnestr Ready To Talk With Republic Leadership *[INTERFAX]* 68
Military Denies Leaflet Drop; Weapons Seized *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 11 Dec]* 69
RSFSR Policy Causes Price Liberalization *[TASS]* 69
Former Dissident Named Security Adviser *[TASS]* 69
Presidential Election Campaign Reviewed *[IZVESTIYA 29 Nov]* 69

Ukraine

Kravchuk Assumes Command of Armed Forces *[TASS]* 71
  Kravchuk on Appointment *[INTERFAX]* 71
  Press Secretary on Control *[TASS]* 72
  Communications Troops Vow Loyalty *[Radio Rossii]* 72
  Kravchuk Meets Army, Navy Commanders *[TASS]* 72
Supreme Soviet Amends Commonwealth Treaty Name *[INTERFAX]* 72
  Changes in Treaty Made *[Radio Rossii]* 72
Consultative Council Approves of Commmonwealth *[INTERFAX]* 73
Kravchuk Urges Bush To Recognize Ukraine *[Kiev International]* 73
  Talks With Bush Envoy *[Kiev Radio]* 73
Independence of Croatia, Slovenia Recognized *[TASS]* 74
Diplomatic Relations Established With Lithuania *[BALTFAX]* 74
  Notes on Relations Exchanged *[Vilnius Radio]* 74
Italian Delegation Ends Visit To Kiev *[Rome ANSA]* 75
Kravchuk: Gorbachev's Future 'Not Our Problem' *[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA 10 Dec]* 75
Supreme Soviet Leader Urges Cabinet Reform *[Moscow Radio]* 75
Cabinet Orders Food Sent to Moscow *[Moscow Radio]* 76
Supreme Soviet Supports CFE Treaty *[HOLOS UKRAYINY 30 Nov]* 76
  Kravchuk Approves Statement *[HOLOS UKRAYINY 30 Nov]* 76
Republic Party Presents Platform *[Kiev Radio]* 76

CAUCASUS

Armenia

Foreign Minister Views Tour; Europe 'Concerned' *[ARMENPRES]* 77
Foreign Ministry Statement on Turkish Relations *[Yerevan Radio]* 77
Closer Economic Ties With Iran Discussed *[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA 10 Dec]* 77
Dalibaltayan Appointed Chief of Staff *[ARMENPRES]* 78
Energy Blockade 'Broken' With New Branch Line *[Radio Rossii]* 78

Azerbaijan

National Council Approves Minsk Statement *[TASS]* 78
Mutalibov Attitude To Commonwealth 'Positive' *[Radio Rossii]* 78
Council Calls Gorbachev Initiative 'Groundless' *[INTERFAX]* 78
NKAO Appeal for Commonwealth Membership *[Yerevan Radio]* 79
Council Urges No 'Hasty Actions' on NKAO *[INTERFAX]* 79
  NKAO, Armenia Decisions 'Illegal' *[ARMENPRES]* 79
NKAO Referendum Observers Issue Appeal *[ARMENPRES]* 79
Interior Troops Chief Urges NKAO Withdrawal *[TASS]* 80
Mekhtiyev Appointed Defense Minister *[TASS]* 80
Decision on Armed Forces Call-Up Reported *[Baku Radio]* 80
Agayev Named Presidential Press Service Director *[Baku Radio]* 80
Republic Takes Over Oil Industry in 'Crisis' *[PRAVDA 5 Dec]* 80

Georgia

Gamsakhurdia Urges Yeltsin to Review Relations *[TASS]* 80
Gamsakhurdia Notes Ukrainian Recognition *[Tbilisi Radio]* 80
  Supreme Council Note to Ukraine *[TASS]* 81
Gamsakhurdia Receives Envoys From U.S. Embassy *[Radio Rossii]* 81
Gamsakhurdia Criticizes Shevardnadze at Meeting *[Tbilisi Radio]* 81
Gamsakhurdia Notes Soviet Troop 'Complaints' *[TASS]* 81
Gamsakhurdia Critics Stripped of Powers *[IZVESTIYA 6 Dec]* 82
Law Changes Number of Supreme Council Members *[SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA 8 Dec]* 82
Council Session Halted by Commotion, Illness *[SAKARTVELOS RESPUBLIKA 30 Nov]* 82
Tskhinvali Officers Protest Allegations *[PRAVDA 7 Dec]* 83

CENTRAL ASIA

Interrepublic Affairs

Central Asia States To Join Commonwealth *[TASS]* 84
  Declaration of Ashkhabad Meeting *[TASS]* 84
  Participants Hold News Conference *[TASS]* 85
  Nazarbayev, Karimov, Akayev Comment *[INTERFAX]* 85
Further on Central Asian Meeting in Ashkhabad 86
  Leaders' Attitudes Viewed *[Radio Rossii]* 86
  Leaders' Stances Cited *[INTERFAX]* 87
  Karimov Interviewed on Meeting *[Moscow TV]* 87
  Akayev Confirms Stance *[Moscow TV]* 88

Kazakhstan

President Issues Decrees on Tariffs, Salaries *[TASS]* 88
Defense Official Favors Joint Armed Forces *[INTERFAX]* 88
Miners Strike Over Falling Living Standards *[INTERFAX]* 89

Kyrgyzstan

President Sworn In, Comments on 'Crisis' *[Radio Rossii]* 89
Akayev Views Commonwealth With 'Understanding' *[TASS]* 89
Economic, Cultural Ties Created With Pakistan *[Islamabad Radio]* 89
Parliament To Discuss Commonwealth Agreement *[INTERFAX]* 89

Tajikistan

Movement for Democratic Reforms Organized *[IZVESTIYA 6 Dec]* 90
Compromise Reached on Pamir Political Status *[TASS]* 90

Arms Control & Disarmament

Nuclear Treaties To Apply to All Republics

LD1212162391 Moscow TASS in English 1540 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Lyudmila Yermakova]

[Text] Moscow December 12 TASS—"The treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other multilateral international treaties and agreements of the Soviet Union, which applied to its entire territory, remain valid with regard to all republics that have ceased to be members of the union. This does not depend on whether they have reaffirmed their commitments under the treaties or not", the Soviet Committee for Constitutional Compliance stated in a resolution issued here on Thursday [12 December].

This decision was taken in view of the withdrawal of some republics from the USSR as well as a possible cessation of the existence of the union itself, a spokesman at the committee told TASS.

In this situation, a question arose about the validity of multilateral treaties, to which the USSR is a party, such as in particular the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and agreements on human rights, the spokesman explained.

Primakov Insists Nuclear Weapons 'Secure'

LD1212204391 Moscow TASS in English 2019 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Lori Cidylo]

[Text] Moscow December 12 TASS—Yevgeniy Primakov, director of Soviet Central Intelligence, insisted at a luncheon for foreign correspondents in Moscow today that the system of control over the Soviet nuclear arsenal is secure and poses no threat to the world. Primakov said the mechanisms in place "absolutely guarantee" that nuclear weapons will not fall into the wrong hands. He emphasised the need to maintain a common military, economic, and central intelligence network among the republics of the former Soviet Union.

"We have to preserve in some form, I want to emphasise, in some form, a common economic space and military strategic structure on the territory of the former Soviet Union...a common military structure is especially important for us as far as nuclear weapons are concerned and especially important for the world," Primakov said.

When asked about nuclear weapons in Kazakhstan, Primakov replied, "I think that they should be, and I am sure that they will be, under one command. When some people say that the presidents of various republics should all have access to the 'three buttons,' from the point of view of the country's defense, this is nonsense. There is no cause for worry," but when pressed for details about who is actually controlling the vast Soviet nuclear arsenal, Primakov was evasive. "Our experts met recently with American experts to discuss the problem, and they all agreed that our system is not less but more secure than anyone else's," he said, adding "this mechanism will remain in place, but who, concretely, is in charge of this, even if I knew it, I wouldn't tell you." As the Soviet Union unravels, no one can be certain that the old systems of control are still in place, or, if they are, how long they will remain so. The Bush administration is concerned that controls may break down completely amid the chaos gripping the country. Director of Central Intelligence, Robert M. Gates, said Tuesday [10 December], "we face a period of uncertainty as Russia and the other republics sort out possession of the weapons and establish new structures and procedures for controlling and operating them." Gates told the House Armed Services Committee, "the situation is dangerously unstable. The economy is in a free fall with no prospects for reversal in sight." Gates also spoke before Congress on Wednesday predicting severe social upheaval in the disintegrating Soviet Union, saying the country has not faced such turmoil since 1917, when Lenin and his Bolshevik Party, later to become the Communist Party, first rose to power. Robert Strauss, the U.S. ambassador to Moscow, warned that in the current climate, a charismatic incendiary could easily gain power, and stoke the flames of nationalist sentiment, creating a situation which could escalate into civil war. CIA analysts worry that with no clear chain of command, a disgruntled army, suffering from shortages of food, fuel, and, in many cases, housing, could pose a threat to the fragile new commonwealth. Speaking of the fledgling leaders of the republics, Gates said, "We are deeply concerned that the enormous economic and social challenges...may overwhelm them."

Although Primakov predicted that "serious social tensions" could grip the Soviet Union by the beginning of next year due to the economic crisis, and particularly if reforms fail, he discounted the possibility of a second coup d'etat possibly by hard-line military forces, predicted by Soviet President, Mikhail Gorbachev, and St. Petersburg Mayor, Anatoliy Sobchak. Tanks will not appear in the streets of Moscow again as they did last August, he said.

Primakov also said the commonwealth formed by Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine, which has already been ratified by the parliaments of those republics, has "positive implications," for the future, although he emphasized that a centralized intelligence network will continue to "serve the interests of society," in whatever form it emerges.

In an effort to stabilize the Soviet economic crisis, President Bush signed a law promoting trade relations with the Soviets on Tuesday.

Control of Nuclear Arms 'Not Clear' to West

PM1312104591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 12 Dec 91 Union Edition p 4

[G. Deynichenko article: "It Is Not Clear to the World Which of Us Has His Finger on the Nuclear Button"]

[Text] The results of the meeting of the leaders of Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus in the Belovezhskaya Forest have probably only increased confusion in the West's main political centers. The spare wording of the foreign policy sections of the documents signed by the three leaders is too general to shed light on the future modus operandi of the Commonwealth as a whole and of each of its three members in the international arena.

The three leaders' decision "to preserve the united command of the common military-strategic space and unified control over nuclear weapons" is designed to be an important reassuring element of the "Belovezhskaya" documents. But our Western partners are not satisfied with this wording. They still are not clear on the question—one, it has to be said, that is most important to the peoples' security—of just what, nonetheless, is the fate of one of the largest nuclear arsenals on the planet.

Western capitals have seen, above all, a certain discrepancy in the participants' approaches to the problem of nuclear control. Whereas Yeltsin assured Bush that nuclear weapons will remain in one pair of hands, the Ukrainian president, on returning to Kiev after the meeting, spoke of a control system with three nuclear buttons, which are earmarked for the three leaders and must, in case of need, be pressed simultaneously. It is quite likely that there is no discrepancy here and that such trilateral control over nuclear weapons is called unified. But any ambiguity must be ruled out in such questions.

Meanwhile, the published documents do not reveal the three leaders' cooperation mechanism in the event—God forbid—of nuclear danger: whether this cooperation will be conducted through the united command, or whether this mechanism will insist on a safety device until the leaders themselves adopt a different decision.

But even if you remove this question, a fourth nuclear republic remains—Kazakhstan with its arsenal of nuclear systems, which, although small by the yardsticks of the former Soviet Union, is nonetheless weighty. How is it possible to speak of centralized control if Kazakhstan is at present outside the newly proclaimed Commonwealth? Finally, President Gorbachev, who nominally, according to the constitution, is commander in chief of the Soviet Armed Forces, is not giving up the nuclear button.

The agreement on the Commonwealth proclaims its members' desire to eliminate nuclear weapons and says that the sides "will respect each other's desire to achieve the status of a nuclear-free zone and a neutral state." These are noble aims which, understandably, are addressed to the future. But political experts believe—maybe without sufficient grounds—that it will not be that easy for the three Commonwealth member states to give up their nuclear status. Both because of prestige considerations and because of a secret wish to try to secure agreements advantageous to themselves because they will have the force of a nuclear wish. London's DAILY TELEGRAPH offers quite a sophisticated prognosis, yet one that is not devoid of probability. Citing the opinion of Western analysts, it maintains that "Yeltsin will hardly wish to destroy his strategic arsenal, mindful that China, which possesses nuclear weapons, is next door." Three other republics—the Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus—"also will not wish to disarm completely, fearing Yeltsin's monopoly in the nuclear arms sphere." It is worth adding that it is a matter not only of this: Kazakhstan has quite a long border with China.

I am sure that a certain part of all the suspicions, perplexities, and doubts being voiced in the West in connection with the destinies of the Soviet nuclear arsenals is simply farfetched. "There are no grounds for believing that Russia or the Ukraine are unreliable states," Helene Carrere d'Encausse, Sovietologist and member of the French Academy, firmly declares. There really are no grounds. And the presumption of innocence must exist in international law. But this does not free state leaders from the obligation to formulate the foreign policy goals and tasks of the newborn Commonwealth precisely and scrupulously, even if the birth caught them unawares.

Of course, with the passage of time, unless fickle fate intervenes in the further existence of the union of three states, their foreign policy declarations will become clear and orderly. Maybe it would make sense to wait before drawing conclusions, only nuclear arms cannot wait. What is needed to keep them in check is clear political power, which would close up the whole military chain from above. Such a structure cannot be seen in the "Belovezhskaya" documents.

Worldwide Issues

Text of Commonwealth Agreement Sent to UN

LD1312001991 Moscow TASS in English
2218 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Nikolay Maslov]

[Text] United Nations December 12 TASS—Gennadiy Buravkin, permanent representative of the Republic of Belarus at the United Nations, on Thursday [12 December] sent the text of the agreement on the establishment of a Commonwealth of Independent States and the statement signed by the leaders of Belarus, Ukraine and Russia to the United Nations secretary general.

On a commission from the leadership of the three republics, Buravkin requested the UN secretariat to circulate the above-mentioned texts as official documents of the 46th session of the UN General Assembly.

Islamic Meeting Admits Azerbaijan to Membership

PM1212121191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
10 Dec 91 Union Edition p 4

[V. Skosyrev report: "Azerbaijan Admitted to Islamic Conference Organization"]

[Text] Whereas Russia, Belarus, and the Ukraine have headed a movement to create a commonwealth of independent states, the former Union republics with primarily Muslim populations are looking for, and finding, support in the Islamic world.

The leader here is Azerbaijan. On 8 December it was admitted to membership of the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO). This was stated on television in Dakar by the foreign minister of Senegal, the African state where the ICO's meeting at the level of heads of state and government opened 9 December.

Amazingly, if the BBC is to be believed, the representatives of Azerbaijan, and also Kazakhstan went to Dakar as members of the Iranian delegation, traveling on the same plane. At the time of publication of this edition, the editorial office had no information to confirm or deny this report. At Kazakhstan's permanent mission in Moscow we were advised to turn to Alma-Ata for explanations. Be that as it may, the forum in Dakar acquires special interest for us in the light of events in the Soviet East.

Meanwhile the attention of foreign observers is concentrated primarily on relations among the Islamic states, about which the ICO meeting allows us to form an opinion. Among the most influential leaders who have come to Dakar are the presidents of Iran, Algeria, and Lebanon, the King of Jordan, and the chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, 'Arafat. However, conspicuous by their absence at the conference are King Fahd, who paid for the erection of the marble buildings designed for the meeting, and also the heads of the majority of other Arab states. They are represented by leaders of the second rank.

The conference is being ostentatiously boycotted by Iraq. It is not happy with the resolution, couched in harsh tones, condemning Baghdad for the invasion of Kuwait and for not being willing to pay reparations and dismantle its war machine, as the United Nations is demanding. The anti-Iraq resolution was adopted on Kuwait's initiative at the meeting of foreign ministers, who gathered in Dakar before the arrival of the heads of state.

If the condemnation of Iraq is being viewed as a success for the moderate Islamic states linked with the United States, then the debate on other items on the agenda at the ministers' meeting was dominated by opponents of appeasing the West and Israel. In particular, in spite of reservations expressed by Egypt, the conference opposed the repeal of the 1975 UN resolution defining Zionism as a form of racism. Let us recall that the United States is seeking the repeal of this resolution; the USSR's representatives have also objected in the United Nations to its one-sided and unobjective character.

Discussion of the question of direct talks between the Arabs and Israel turned into an open clash between Iran and the PLO. In reply to the speech of the Iranian delegate, who claimed that direct Arab-Israeli contacts could only be harmful, the Palestinian spokesman declared: Do not try to show you are more devoted to our cause than we are ourselves.

Observers note that in addition to defending his position at the talks with Israel in Madrid and Washington, 'Arafat is faced with another equally complex task. He is hoping to regain the favor of Saudi Arabia and the other wealthy Persian Gulf monarchies, which cut off financial subsidies to the PLO after it supported Iraq's aggression against Kuwait.

The Islamic foreign ministers also expressed some sympathy for Libya in its conflict with the United States, Britain, and France.

KAL 'Black Box' Capabilities Detailed

92UF0320A Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 10 Dec 91 p 4

[Reader's letter and response by Colonel V. Dudin, USSR distinguished military navigator and candidate of military science: "The Secrets of the 'Black Box': Once Again on the Tragic End of Flight 007"]

[Text] *Dear Editors!*

I am following the publications on the subject of the well-known tragic event of 1983 involving the Boeing-747 South Korean airliner. As I understand it, much could be revealed by decoding the information contained in the so-called "black box." This part, however, is being hushed up. Please tell us at least what kind of device it is and what specifically it does on a Boeing-747.

A. Shcherbak, Mogilev.

The editors asked a specialist who participated in the investigation of the circumstances of the South Korean airliner's demise to answer our reader's question. Colonel V. Dudin, USSR distinguished military navigator and candidate of military science, comments:

The Boeing-747 aircraft No. 7442 was acquired by the South Korean airline from the West German company Lufthansa. It was equipped with a recording device (in laymen's language—"black box"). I want to say at the outset: The Soviet commission investigating the incident has not received any additional information from the respective Western organizations. The nature of additional work on the Boeing No. 7442 in the United States not long before its last flight also remains unclear. That is, I want to note that there are still no answers to many very important questions.

All Boeing-747 modifications are equipped with recording devices designed to accomplish two tasks: to record voice communications between the crew and outside radio contacts, as well as among themselves; and to register flight data. In other words, the flight parameters and the status of various flight control devices and movable elements in the aircraft design. All in all, about 80 parameters and, as aviators call them, one-time signals are recorded.

Depending on the aircraft modification, flight recording devices may be slightly different in design. For instance, to record voice communications on the Boeing-747, the American devices 642 C-1 (made by Collins) or A 100 A (made by Fairchild) are used. The construction and schematics of these devices do not differ significantly, and in principle they operate the same way. Conversations of crew members among themselves and on any external channels are recorded on a closed-loop magnetic tape, but only for the preceding 30 minutes of flight. Information recorded earlier is automatically erased and replaced (the tape moves at a speed of 7 mm [millimeters] a second). By the way, our domestic recording devices register conversations during the entire flight.

In accordance with ICAO [International Civil Aviation Organization] standards, voice recorders must ensure the safety of the recording with the device submerged in sea water for up to 30 days. However, if water seeps through into the information collector, the recording is lost after 48 hours.

The voice recorder (bloc B-59 in both versions of implementation) is installed in the instrument section in the tail part of the Boeing body. It is housed in a thermo-insulated antishock standard container. All electrical connections are placed in one contact plug (thus reducing the probability of water seeping through) in the back of the container.

The Boeing-747 flight data recorder is a memory device of the 981-61-02-001 type (Sandstrand Company) that registers, as I already mentioned, about 80 parameters on magnetic tape. The length of uninterrupted recording is 25 hours. This device does not differ in principle from the Soviet device MSRP (magnetic recorder of flight modes), which is also installed on board the aircraft in a spherical orange-colored container.

The main element of the Sandstrand Recorder is the data collection bloc, or the collector. It consists of a tape drive and recording devices linked by interbloc connectors with the sensors of all parameters being recorded (flight altitude and speed, landing gear in or out, status of ailerons, steering gear positions, etc.). The data collector bloc is housed in the same instrument section as the voice recorder. The control panel where documentary information is punched in (flight takeoff time, flight number, route, fuel supply, captain's code, etc.) is in the crew cabin on the right side—behind the right pilot's chair. Just like the voice recorder, the data collector bloc is housed in a thermal, shock- and water- proof container.

Both collectors are equipped with an autonomous action radiohydroacoustic beacon that marks the location of the aircraft in the water. The maker—the American company Ducommun Corporation, model H15F2108. Working broadcast frequency is 87.5 kHz, impulse length—nine microseconds, nine bursts a minute. Operation time period up to 30 days; working submersion depth up to 6,000 meters.

Did our side find the recorder ("black box") in the case of the tragic Flight 007? Admiral (Ret.) V. Sidorov who commanded the Pacific Fleet at that time maintains that we did. I only have indirect evidence in this respect, since I personally have not seen the devices. In September-October 1983, we ordinary members of the commission were informed that processing work on the onboard recorders had started. There was information that fragments of some sentences from the voice recorder had been successfully decoded. I presume that this work was done at one of the Air Force or the Ministry of Aviation research institutes, since the information from the instrumentation of the Boeing intercepted over the Kola Peninsula had been processed in the same place.

Did we aviation specialists have a special interest in the secrets of the "black box" extracted from the bottom of the Sea of Okhotsk? To tell you honestly—no, although they could substantially supplement the total picture of the event. On the basis of all the other data we had, it was clear that the flight through Soviet territory had been intentional and planned in advance. We reached this conclusion as a result of careful analysis of the data collected on that September night by our ground and air installations. We spent tens of days and nights poring over that data.

I have no doubt that if it becomes possible to reveal the secrets of the "black box," any doubts about the provocative nature of Flight 007 will be dispelled even among the most stubborn skeptics.

United States & Canada

Gates: Union 'Unstable to a Dangerous Degree'

PM1312120191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 12 Dec 91 Union Edition p 4

[Correspondent A. Blinov report: "R. Gates: Vast Empire Exploding"]

[Text] Washington—U.S. official circles acknowledge that in its assessments of the situation in our country, Washington is continuing to lag behind the events which are rapidly superseding one another. Delivering a speech in Chicago on Tuesday, U.S. President G. Bush was forced to confine himself to what was evidently the briefest statement on Soviet-U.S. relations in his presidential career. "We are proud of the way the administration has acted in respect to the evolution in the USSR," G. Bush said. "As of today, however, it is extremely intricate."

On 10 December Margaret Tutwiler, State Department spokesperson on press affairs, and other U.S. officials added virtually nothing to the original assessments of the agreement reached by the leaders of three republics in Belarus.

According to M. Tutwiler, the administration leadership is counting on the clarifications with which Thomas Niles, U.S. assistant secretary of state, will return to Washington and, to a still greater degree, on the visit of U.S. Secretary of State J. Baker to Moscow, Kiev, and Minsk. He flies out on 14 December. According to M. Tutwiler, J. Baker has not yet tried, as he has in the past, to get clarifications over the telephone from his colleague—USSR Foreign Minister E.A. Shevardnadze.

Robert Gates, the new CIA director, was the administration's chief orator on the problem of the changes in the USSR on 10 December, addressing the House Armed Services Committee.

R. Gates believes that "an unprecedented sudden internal explosion of such a vast empire as Russia or the Soviet Union" is taking place. This process is giving rise to a kind of historical paradox: The danger of war in Europe or of a nuclear conflict has diminished and the prospect of democracy and economic reforms has opened up, and at the same time the disintegrating Union is encountering numerous internal crises, the collapse of central power, potentially large-scale civil riots, and a fall in social discipline. "And all this at a time when it still possesses almost 30,000 nuclear arms, the most powerful of which are still targeted on us," R. Gates pointed out.

The internal political situation in the USSR, R. Gates believes, is "unstable to a dangerous degree." All the republics are encountering huge economic, social, and political problems which are hampering the transition to democracy and a market economy and are potentially dangerous. The economy is in a state of free fall, and no prospect of improvement is visible at present. "The serious shortage of food and fuel in a number of regions, the disintegration of the Armed Forces, and the ongoing interethnic conflicts this winter will create a combination of factors which could give rise to the most serious civil riots in the former USSR since the Bolsheviks came to power," R. Gates believes.

"It cannot be ruled out that in such circumstances there might be a return to an authoritarian government under the leadership of reformers trying desperately to feed the people and to prevent an explosion, or of nationalists pursuing a xenophobic, atavistic idea of Russia."

In the CIA director's opinion, the United States must take account of the possibility that "the former Soviet Union might become a new source for the proliferation of nuclear arms." In particular, it cannot be ruled out, he believes, that "the hunger for hard currency" might prompt defense enterprises to export appropriate materials and equipment. Tens of thousands of scientists and engineers are emigrating from the country. The majority to the West and to Israel. However, there might also be experts who will end up in "third world" countries with an interest in special arms.

Little Change Seen in U.S. Asian Policy

PM1112162791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 30 Nov 91 p 4

[Article by Vsevolod Ovchinnikov under the "View From Moscow" rubric: "Adjustments Rather Than Changes. U.S. Policy in Asia After the 'Cold War'"]

[Text] How will U.S. policy in Asia change now that the "cold war" has ended? What lies in store for the Asia-Pacific region now that our bipolar world has become unipolar and the leading role is played by one rather than two superpowers? Will the United States reduce its military presence in Asia as the specter of the "Soviet threat" has disappeared? Will military-political confrontation be replaced by another dominant factor—trade and economic conflict—turning former allies into dangerous rivals? Finally, will all this give rise to isolationist trends in the United States and a desire to take refuge in fortress America?

It was expected that these questions would be answered by President Bush's visit to Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and Australia, scheduled for 28 November-7 December.

This heightened interest in Washington's present stance is understandable. Few relish the possibility of isolationist trends. Some are worried about trade barriers. Others are concerned about the military vacuum. Who will fill it: Japan? China? Will unpredictable conflicts arise? That is why Bush was expected to give assurances that the United States has no intention of leaving Asia or even of turning its back on it.

The U.S. President was to have visited the Asia-Pacific region after going to Madrid for the Near East conference and to Rome and The Hague for meetings with the NATO and Common Market allies. But domestic policy factors unexpectedly came into play. The Americans began to say that the head of the White House was spending too much time "traveling abroad," ignoring his own country's domestic problems. The Republican Party's defeat in the Senate elections for the state of Pennsylvania was a worrying sign for Bush, coming on the eve of his own election campaign. All this prompted a step rarely taken in diplomatic practice: The capitals concerned were informed that the U.S. President's visit could not take place as scheduled.

The news was received in the Asia-Pacific region with irritation and resentment. The words "slap in the face" were even used. This was followed by a storm of criticism that Washington underestimates the most dynamic region of the world, devoting excessive attention to Western Europe, the Soviet Union, and the Near East.

The Japanese reacted particularly strongly. They had hoped that the summit meeting in Tokyo on the eve of the 50th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor would take the heat out of the anti-Japanese feeling connected with this tragic date in U.S. history. (On 7 December 1941, Japan launched a surprise attack on the main base of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, knocking out 21 U.S. ships and 328 aircraft.) Moreover, it would have been the first time a new Japanese premier had received the U.S. President in Tokyo before making his traditional pilgrimage to Washington. It would have been extremely valuable for Miyazawa to begin his term in office with the signing of a "Tokyo declaration." It was therefore all the more vexing to be deprived of this gift.

The shock was so great that Washington soon had to make another announcement: The visit to the Asia-Pacific region has not been canceled, merely postponed. It is now going to take place at the beginning of January: Bush is even going to spend New Year's night on board his aircraft. In addition, other leading figures in the U.S. Administration visited Asia in November. Secretary of State J. Baker went to Tokyo, Seoul, and Beijing. Defense Secretary R. Cheney and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman C. Powell followed him to Japan and South Korea.

Evidently wishing to set people's minds at rest, President Bush addressed a meeting of the Asia Society in New York, publicly condemning isolationism and confirming his commitment to close ties between the United States and the Asia-Pacific region. While historical legacy links the United States to Europe, he said, its future is equally linked to Asia. According to Bush, the Asia-Pacific region is marked by the highest rate of development in the world. In the eighties alone, economic growth reached 41 percent in Australia, 52 percent in Japan, 60 percent in Malaysia, 89 percent in Hong Kong, 93 percent in Singapore, 116 percent in Taiwan, and 150 percent in South Korea.

The Asia-Pacific region is the U.S. biggest trade partner. Annual turnover between them is in excess of $300 billion, which is approximately one-third more than the volume of transatlantic trade. The United States now exports more goods to Thailand than to the Soviet Union, more to Indonesia than to Eastern Europe, and more to Singapore than to Italy. This vigorous turnover is accompanied by a two-way flow of capital. The United States has invested more than $61 billion in the region, while Asia has invested more than $95 billion in the United States. With this kind of interdependence, trends toward isolationism would be disastrous.

In his speech the U.S. President listed the six main conditions which, in his opinion, can guarantee lasting peace in the Asia-Pacific region. They are: free trade, cooperation in the security sphere, commitment to democracy, innovation in science, environmental protection, and respect for cultural identity.

It is hard to fault this list. As a whole, Bush's New York speech has been well received in the region. Although some of his statements have put some people on their guard. For example, the President spoke of the need to ensure more favorable conditions for U.S. businessmen in Japan. This is seen as an intention on Washington's part to increase pressure on Tokyo in the trade and economic sphere. Bush's remark that China and North Korea are resisting the general world trend toward political pluralism and facilitating the proliferation of dangerous weapons is seen in Asia as his sharpest statement to Beijing to date. Baker and Cheney criticized Pyongyang even more harshly for its refusal to admit International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors. They called North Korea's nuclear program the main threat to security in Northeast Asia.

The situation has gone further than verbal warnings. The Pentagon leaders announced in Seoul that plans to reduce U.S. troops in South Korea from 39,000 to 30,000 have been suspended. Furthermore, 16 Patriot systems are to be deployed along the 38th parallel in case there should ever be a nuclear missile attack from the North.

Admittedly, inflexibility in military affairs is combined with flexibility in the political sphere. It is worth noting that the U.S. secretary of state spoke in favor of employing the European experience of confidence-building measures in Asia and, in time, "involving China and the Soviet Union or Russia more closely in a system of multilateral cooperation in the region."

Baker confirmed that U.S.-Japanese relations are still the most important of all the United States' bilateral ties. However, he urged Japan not to confine itself to "checkbook diplomacy" but to play a more active role in the international arena. Not only in trade and economic affairs, but also in the defense of democracy, the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and environmental protection. Japan must become one of the leaders in solving world problems and not rely on outside pressure to deal with economic or security matters in its own interests.

The secretary of state called for "global partnership" between the United States and Japan. If these two countries—which account for some 40 percent of the world's production of goods and services—coordinate their diplomatic and economic efforts, this will, he said, play a key role in the formation of a new world order after the end of the "cold war."

The Pentagon report "Strategic Principles for Asia: Looking to the 21st Century" notes that there are a number of threats in the region apart from the Soviet threat. Consequently, the key elements of U.S. strategy in the Asia-Pacific region—forward-based forces and bilateral military agreements (with Tokyo, Seoul, Canberra, and possibly Manila)—will remain unchanged. It is planned to reduce the U.S. military presence in Asia by

13 percent by the end of next year. From the mid-nineties, the United States will be prepared to discuss regional security problems on a multilateral basis, which it has refused to do in the past. (Some people in Washington see this as a means of controlling growth in Japan's military potential, like NATO's role in relation to Germany.)

In short, partial adjustments, rather than fundamental changes, are characteristic of U.S. policy in the Asia-Pacific region after the "cold war." Although the level of military confrontation in the region has fallen and the barriers of alienation are being eroded, an "Asian Helsinki" is still a long way off.

Northeast Asia

Union Disintegration Causing Japan 'Concern'

LD1312095191 Moscow TASS in English 0910 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Vyacheslav Bantin]

[Text] Tokyo December 13 TASS—The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs is expressing concern over the future of the disputed Soviet Kuril islands.

A report published in Friday's YOMIURI newspaper expresses worries that the possible resignation of President Gorbachev and the total disintegration of the Soviet Union may hinder negotiations on the four South Kuril islands claimed by Japan. The paper quotes unnamed Japanese Foreign Ministry representatives.

Quoting other sources in the Foreign Ministry the paper reports that the total disintegration of the central government in Moscow may jeopardise future Soviet economic reforms and is also causing concern. "The future of reforms based on the introduction of market relations remains quite unclear," said a Japanese Foreign Ministry official.

South Korean Indecision Over Aid Reported

PM1212145191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 6 Dec 91 Union Edition p 5

[Correspondent A. Shalnev report: "Hesitations in Seoul"]

[Text] Seoul—The South Korean Democratic Party, the leading opposition party, has accused the administration of President No Tae-u of "excessive haste" over the issue of economic and financial aid to the Soviet Union. In a statement made 11 December, the democrats' leaders stressed that the administration should bear responsibility for the additional burdens that will be placed on the country's economy if the Soviet Union is unable to pay off its foreign debts.

In accordance with Seoul's decision, we will be offered aid worth $3 billion. Many observers are convinced that this was a direct payment in return for Moscow's readiness to establish diplomatic relations with South Korea, to support its admission into the United Nations, and to promote the reunification of Korea by putting pressure on Pyongyang.

We have already received $1 billion in cash of the promised $3 billion and were to have received another $800 million in the form of credits for purchasing consumer goods in Korea before the end of this year. It is planned that next year we will be given another $700 million and $500 million in a year's time.

It cannot be completely ruled out that Seoul will introduce changes to this timetable—bearing in mind current events in the Soviet Union, and in particular the virtual bankruptcy of Vneshekonombank [Bank for Foreign Economic Activity] and the Ukraine's declaration of independence. No Tae-u's administration is not hiding its serious concern that it will probably have to face major difficulties when it attempts to recover our repayments on loans which, as far as I understand it, resulted in Korea itself having to run up debts since it does not have liquid funds of its own on such a scale.

A rumor has also swept Seoul that instead of the promised $800 million, Moscow will receive goods worth no more than $300 million this year. However, eventually the Trade and Industry Ministry let it be known that Seoul will nonetheless meet its obligation. The appropriate assurances were received Wednesday by representatives of export companies. According to one ministry leader, "economic cooperation with the USSR is developing for diplomatic reasons. We must not discontinue it and should not delay its development without sufficient grounds for doing so. If—the ministry leader continued—the situation in the Soviet Union were so serious that problems would be created for economic relations between Seoul and Moscow, our embassy in Moscow would have informed us about it. But we have received no such messages from our embassy."

But, having said this, the Seoul official admitted that the issue of loans and supplies slated for the next two years will be resolved later.

Among others, the following fact indicates that a positive decision will be made nonetheless: South Korea's foreign trade balance deficit is growing and next year, presidential election year, it will reach a record level of $13 billion according to some estimates. Discontinuing further financing of purchases of Korean goods by the Soviet Union will create even greater problems for exporters, and problems fraught with political consequences for President No Tae-u and the ruling party.

South Korea To Be Most-Favored Nation

SK1112085791 Moscow Radio Moscow in Korean 1330 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] According to (Yerbakov), chairman of the Soviet Tariff Committee on an official visit to Seoul, the Soviet

Union will guarantee most-favored nation treatment for the ROK in customs inspection from 1 January 1992.

He said that an exceptional customs inspection system will be applied to ROK goods. The Soviet Tariff Committee will inspect goods in the ROK before shipping them to the Soviet Union. Such a system is in operation only for the United States at present.

North, South Korea 'Closer Than Ever Before'

SK1312054291 Moscow Radio Moscow in Korean 0900 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Commentary by station commentator Rassadin]

[Text] The United States has completely withdrawn its nuclear weapons from the southern half of the Korean peninsula, YONHAP News Agency quoted a high-ranking government official, who wanted to remain anonymous, as saying.

Station commentator Rassadin writes:

While the U.S. Administration has not yet confirmed the complete withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons from the southern half of the Korean peninsula, such a conclusion, which is considered to be a certainty, appears to be based on the ROK side's suggestion that the U.S. military base in Kunsan be put on the list of targets for nuclear inspections to be conducted in the South and North of Korea. This means that there are no nuclear weapons in that base now. About 100 nuclear weapon units, including aircraft-carried bombs and shells, had been deployed at the base.

Let me remind you that it was thanks to U.S. President Bush's recent proposal for nuclear arms reductions that the U.S. tactical nuclear weapons have been withdrawn from the southern half of the Korean peninsula.

ROK Prime Minister Chong Won-sik stated that his government is willing to open military facilities and U.S. military bases in the ROK to North Korean inspectors if Pyongyang agrees to simultaneous inspection of its nuclear facilities.

Also, according to AFP, DPRK Premier Yon Hyong-muk called for joint control [tongje] over the withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons and for simultaneous inspection of the nuclear facilities in the South and North.

Pyongyang, while persistently denying any plan for nuclear development, has stated that it is interested only in the peaceful use of nuclear facilities. Moreover, the DPRK had earlier stated on several occasions that it was willing to sign an agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency concerning the nuclear facilities built in its territory when it is confirmed that the United States has begun withdrawing the nuclear weapons from South Korea.

So, the ROK and the DPRK can be said to have come closer than ever before to reaching an agreement on creating a nuclear-free zone on the Korean peninsula. Of course, this needs a great deal of effort to be become effective.

Meantime, it is of great significance that after years of confrontation the two Korean states are now resolving such complicated issues as the military issue at a negotiating table.

China Will Not Help Develop DPRK Arms

SK1212083491 Moscow Radio Moscow in Korean 0900 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Commentary by station commentator Oleg Alekseyev]

[Text] Tian Jiyun, vice premier of the PRC State Council, in a meeting with Watanabe, Japanese foreign minister, declared that China will not cooperate with North Korea in developing nuclear weapons.

In this connection, station commentator (Oleg Alekseyev), writes the following: The declaration of Tian Jiyun, vice premier of the PRC State Council, is another evidence showing China's principled position on the issue concerning the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

The international community has attached particularly important meaning to the issue of nuclear nonproliferation. What is a problem is that the possibility of nuclear weapons proliferation in Asia and the rest of the world increases considerably.

In addition, Vice Premier Tian Jiyun declared that China plans to sign the Non-Nuclear Proliferation Treaty in the near future. It goes without saying that such a measure will be an important event. I am convinced that such a measure will have a positive influence on the Asian situation, which is faced with the acute issue of the uncontrolled proliferation of nuclear weapons. Precisely proceeding from such a standpoint, the North Korean issue was discussed in meetings between Tian Jiyun, Chinese vice premier, and the Japanese leaders.

I will briefly talk about the essence of the issue. The DPRK signed the Non-Nuclear Proliferation Treaty in 1985. The treaty stipulates that countries, which do not possess nuclear weapons and sign the treaty, in case that they have atomic-energy facilities within their lands, should open their doors for an international inspection.

Regrettably, Pyongyang has still avoided such a demand. This concerns many countries, including Japan. Therefore, the concern arises that the DPRK Government is promoting a research project to develop nuclear weapons of its own. It goes without saying that this situation will never contribute to easing the military and political tension on the Korean peninsula and to developing international relations in all districts of the Far East.

And then, what is the prospect for the issue? I expect that the issue which concerns the world community will be resolved in the near future. A week ago, the DPRK

Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying that, if the withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons from South Korea begins, it will agree to accept inspection of its nuclear facilities. There is a condition in the statement. That is, inspection of North Korea should be conducted simultaneously with the inspection of South Korea.

Seoul announced that the withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons had already began and that the withdrawal will be completed within a short time. After U.S. nuclear weapons are completely eliminated from South Korea, there will be no problem in connection with the international inspection of Seoul nuclear facilities. At any rate, observers interpreted the statement issued by ROK Defense Minister Yi Chong-ku in mid-November in this way.

Considering all facts, questions lie in Pyongyang. The positive resolution of an inspection of nuclear facilities in North Korea will open up the possibility of realizing the proposal for turning the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-free zone, which the DPRK put forward a few years ago. Needless to say, China can cooperate to realize such a proposal.

Near East & South Asia

India Considers Ties With Ex-Union Republics

OW1312014191 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1602 GMT 12 Dec 91

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] India is actually considering whether to establish full diplomatic relations with the former Union republics—a representative of the Soviet Union's Foreign Ministry announced. Talking to a correspondent from "DP" [Diplomatic Panorama] he stressed that India still had not made a final decision regarding this. Moreover it is not fully clear in what form and when these relations may be established.

According to the diplomat, one of the matters under consideration will be the possibility of opening Indian consulates in the republics, starting with the Central Asian republics, with whom India has long had cultural and economic links. Afterwards relations may become so important that the Indian consulates will change to Embassies.

The diplomat believes that this particular proposal is the one most likely to be realized. He doubted that the Indians would open Embassies in the republics, "this minute" so to speak. He believed that the improbability of this step could be explained by the fact that "this is a very laborious process."

East Europe

Gorbachev CSFR Visit in December Cancelled

LD1212172691 Moscow TASS in English
1708 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Vitaliy Yaroshevskiy]

[Text] Prague December 12 TASS—Mikhail Gorbachev will not go to Czechoslovakia on an official visit scheduled for the end of this year, the CTK Czechoslovak news agency reported today, referring to the Czechoslovak president's office.

Gorbachev was expected to go to Czechoslovakia in the second half of December to sign the Czechoslovak-Soviet agreement on good- neighbourly and friendly relations and cooperation, which was initialed in Prague early in October.

The agreement can be signed only after the Soviet state and political system becomes clear, the statement said.

Envoys Deliver Address to Serbian President

LD1312001591 Moscow TASS in English
2219 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] Belgrade December 12 TASS—Ambassadors of the Soviet Union, the United States and acting charge d'affairs of the Netherlands today visited Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and deputy union secretary on the Yugoslavian national defence Admiral Stane Brovet to pass them an address of the Soviet Union, the United States and the EC to the Yugoslavian Army, and presidents of Serbia and Croatia.

The address insistently called to provide for immediate and complete fulfilment of the cease-fire agreement signed in Geneva on November 23, 1991.

A similar address was passed on the same day in Zagreb to Croatian President Franjo Tudjman by the Soviet and U.S. consuls general.

Prague Reaction to Minsk Accord Reported

92UF0336A Moscow TRUD in Russian
11 Dec 91 p 3

[TRUD correspondents' reports from world capitals: "Ambivalent Reaction"]

[Text] Prague—Commenting on the recent events which have been performed on our country's political stage, local newspapers are not stinting in emotional headlines of the "New Step Toward Disintegration" and "Destroyed 'Union of the Indestructible'" type, but are guarding against forecasts and unequivocal evaluations. President Havel also has refrained from such as yet. The press spokesman for the CSFR president confined himself yesterday merely to a statement that the invitation to

M.S. Gorbachev to visit Czechoslovakia held good and that the treaty on cooperation between the two countries was ready for signing.

"The Soviet Union is, so to speak, already dead, but no one knows what will become of its legacy," the trade union paper PRACE writes. LIDOVE NOVINY emphasizes: "Let us not overestimate the birth in Brest of the new child. Assuming the burden of the countless international commitments of the former USSR is a giant problem. Will the newborn subject be capable of coping with this?" In the newspaper's opinion, Minsk should, evidently, become a Soviet Brussels for it lies on the main route leading to Europe.

"The conversion of the Soviet Union into some different union should be approved by the people," MLADA FRONTA DNES observes. "But the people are so tired of standing in line outside empty stores that it is all the same to them. They are not even excited by the appalling fact that the arms in the country which still exist (on paper) could (in reality) destroy the world."

Poland's Balcerowicz Postpones Visit to Moscow

LD1312060991 Moscow TASS in English 1732 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Andrey Pershin]

[Text] Moscow December 12 TASS—A Moscow visit of Polish Deputy Prime Minister Leszek Balcerowicz has been postponed, as on December 7 he was instructed to supervise the work of the country's government until a new cabinet is formed.

Balcerowicz, the "chief architect" of the Polish market reforms known as "Balcerowicz's plan", has been invited by Russian President Boris Yeltsin to participate in an international economists' meeting to discuss the Russian market reform.

In a letter to Gennadiy Burbulis, the state secretary and first deputy of the Russian Government's head, the Polish vice-premier noted he estimates the invitation to the economists' meeting as a recognition of Polish reforms.

Balcerowicz expressed his readiness to come to Moscow at a time convenient for both sides.

Volskiy's Union Signs Agreement With Hungary

PM1312101791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 9 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Untitled report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, REUTER, and UPI roundup]

[Text] The first agreement on economic cooperation following the disintegration of CEMA has been concluded between the Hungarian Industrialists Union and the [Soviet] Scientific-Industrial Union.

The Hungarian Industrialists Union and the Scientific-Industrial Union are fundamental social structures which represent the interests of industry and of entrepreneurs in both countries. Gabor Szeles, president of the Hungarian Industrialists Union, and Arkadiy Volskiy, president of the Scientific-Industrial Union, participated in the signing of the agreement.

West Europe

Shevardnadze, Genscher Discuss Brest Accord

LD1212193391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1855 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Excerpts] Moscow, 12 December (TASS)—FRG Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher today telephoned USSR External Relations Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. According to the USSR External Relations Ministry Information Directorate, the discussion during the exchange of views covered the situation in our country and the effect on it of the accords reached in Brest by the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus.

Eduard Shevardnadze noted that a very important and positive process has been started. Although it is not proceeding in a straightforward manner, it is undoubtedly, on the whole, a major event. Mention was made of the difficulties that are to be surmounted by joint effort, including finding a solution to the economic crisis situation. [passage omitted]

At the end of the conversation, the FRG foreign minister broached the question of Erich Honecker. Eduard Shevardnadze said that he had only just heard that Erich Honecker is in the Chilean Embassy in Moscow.

The ministers agreed to maintain contact and to exchange information on all matters of interest to the two sides.

Silayev on EC Offer of ECU 500 Million

OW1312045391 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2027 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Chairman of the Inter-State Economic Committee [IEC] Ivan Silayev has announced that the European Commission is ready to offer another ECU 500 mn [million] for technology to assist reforms in the republics which are to file in their plans for those sums by January. I. Silayev was talking to journalists after signing an agreement with representatives of the European Commission on technical cooperation with the republics to a total sum of ECU 400 mn. Ivan Silayev explained it as a gift intended, among other things, for training personnel, developing energy production, and food distribution.

To questions by journalists I. Silayev remarked he took "positively" the agreement on a Commonwealth of three republics. He said the economic part of the agreement "reflected to a certain degree the clauses of the treaty on an economic community."

Concerning the Inter-State Economic Committee I. Silayev said "all agreed on a need for such a body," though possibly under a different name. He added that he was having consultations on this issue with Russia's leadership Wednesday [11 December] to be continued Friday [passage as received].

It has been suggested setting up under his committee the republics' Councils of Ministers on these or those branches of economy. Such councils could debate issues leaving for his committee their implementation. That was earlier proposed by the committee, but was rejected by the State Council.

I. Silayev went on to say that next Wednesday comes a meeting of the Government Heads Council to define the status and structure of the IEC.

Further on EC Aid

LD1212215191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 12 Dec 91

[From the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] The protocol signed in Moscow today by Ivan Stepanovich Silayev [chairman of the USSR Interstate Economic Committee] and Michael Ronald Emmerson, head of the EC Commission representation, envisages giving our country free aid totalling 400 million ECUs [European Currency Units].

[Begin recording] [Silayev] This does not mean that the 400 million [ECUs] will be handed over right now and that we will begin to somehow waste it. It means that work is beginning on the most important programs. They have been formed like this: Every republic has spoken about its intentions, its problems, what it would like to do taking into account the processes going on here in the country. And the republics are forming more, I would say, purposeful programs. I must further tell you that the participants of the Maastricht summit meeting discussed our questions, including naturally—and the proper respect must be, and has been, paid—they discussed with concern the situation, in particular the food supply situation in Moscow and St. Petersburg, and they expressed the desire and readiness to examine additional special purpose measures, what needs to be done in order to improve the situation in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

[Perfilyev] Is it possible to say on whose behalf you signed the agreement? Who is behind this?

[Silayev] The members of the community, the economic community. [end recording]

Europarliament Suspends Aid

LD1212181191 Moscow TASS in English 1523 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Krivykh]

[Text] Paris December 12 TASS—The European Parliament on Thursday [12 December] decided to suspend EC aid to the Soviet Union after a debate on its budget for 1992, the FRANCE PRESSE News Agency reports.

The parliament endorsed the budget but urged the EC leadership to "reconsider prospects for financing the EC foreign policy."

The European Community will form a reserve of 1.6 million ECU (European Currency Unit), including 400 million ECU (about 2.8 million francs) that had been earmarked for the former Soviet Union. The parliament stressed the community will not sacrifice funds which can be used for its own needs.

If EC finance ministers approve the parliament's decision, Moscow and St. Petersburg may be left without 250 million ECU promised by the European Community at its recent session in Maastricht.

EC Defers Decision on Next Tranche of Loan

PM1212145791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 7 Dec 91 Union Edition p 7

[Untitled report from REUTER, AP, UPI, TASS, and AFP roundup]

[Text] The European Community economics and finance ministers have postponed until 16-17 December a decision on the allocation of the next tranche of the 1.25 billion ECU [European Currency Units] loan to the Soviet Union to buy food.

It was announced that this was due to the fact that "because of the busy agenda the ministers participating in the meeting within the framework of the intergovernmental conference on the problem of creating an EC economic and currency union were unable to hold the session that was supposed to make that decision."

Congress of People's Deputies

Legislative Discussion Focuses on Commonwealth

Signatures Collected for Congress

PM1212123591 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Report by parliamentary observer R. Minasov under the "Union Parliament" rubric: "Signature Collection"]

[Text] No. 27 Novyy Arbat houses the USSR Supreme Soviet committees and commissions. For the past two days the 20th story has been the venue for the headquarters of the action group headed by Union parliament member Vladimir Samarin which wishes to convene the Sixth, Extraordinary Congress of USSR People's Deputies.

Signatures are being collected to an appeal which says notably: "Given the real threat of collapse of the multinational state and the country's headlong approach to political and socioeconomic catastrophe and in conformity with Article 110 of the USSR Constitution and the expression of the will of our voters, we the undersigned USSR people's deputies declare the need to convene promptly the Sixth Extraordinary Congress of USSR People's Deputies."

The signatories to the appeal include, among others, quite a few familiar figures—Nikolay Ryzhkov, former chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers; V. Alksnis and N. Petrushenko, activists of the "Soyuz" deputies' group; and the not-unknown Leonid Sukhov.

In response to a question from me, N.I. Ryzhkov said:

"But what wil happen to Russia, has Yeltsin considered this? After all, millions of Muslims live in Russia, and I also understand that this action by the three leaders was prepared not only behind Gorbachev's back, but also in secret from Nazarbayev."

Vladimir Samarin, leader of the action group, regards the fact that the agreement concluded by the trio does not take account of the interests of the other republics as the main danger.

As I file this report, the appeal bears the signatures of around 200 people's deputies, while 442 signatures are required to convene a congress. However, the action group headquarters has no doubt that more signatures will be forthcoming.

It is reported here that the congress could theoretically start work on 25 December.

'Important Milestone' in Dialogue

LD1212181791 Moscow TASS in English 1634 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow December 12 TASS—Vladimir Samarin, head of a group of deputies advocating a session of Congress of People's Deputies, announced an extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR would certainly be held. Addressing a news conference for Soviet and foreign journalists, he said that some 300 deputies favour the idea of a congress and have signed the questionnaire in its favour.

There is concern over the fact that some news organisations misrepresent the purposes of holding the congress, Samarin said.

He said there are attempts to influence negatively society's opinion—particularly of the organs of power and citizens of sovereign republics—toward to the institution of fully fledged representatives of millions. Deputies advocating congressional session said talk about the absence of constitutional guarantees of a congress is groundless.

The group believes that the main purpose of the Union forum is not to identify those who are guilty of the disintegration of statehood and people's economy, but to adopt decisions that would help channel the "uncontrolled and largely unconstitutional process of redistribution of powers of state bodies and property of the community into the route of law." The very future of the country would be unpredictable without such decisions, Samarin said. There would be a real danger of bloody clashes and the danger of the spread of nuclear weapons would be increased many-fold.

Congress advocates urged heads of sovereign states, public and political leaders, people's deputies at every level, parties and movements and work collectives to show a responsible attitude to the dangerous reality and choose in favour of a peaceful political dialogue. They believe a Congress of USSR People's Deputies could become an important milestone in this dialogue.

Supreme Soviet

Nationalities Council Delays Debate

LD1212152091 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1320 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow, 12 Dec (TASS)—The Council of Nationalities of the Union parliament today decided not to debate the documents on a Commonwealth of Independent States signed in Belarus until the stance of the other five republics that participated in the Novo-Ogarevo process has been worked out.

A statement was made on behalf of the Belarussian deputies that the people's deputies from Belarus represented in the Council of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet will henceforth take part in the work of the chamber as observers only. Whether the Russian parliamentarians will embark on a similar step will emerge later, when the Council of Nationalities and the Council of the Union of the USSR Supreme Soviet gather for a joint plenary sitting.

Commenting at the request of a TASS correspondent upon the wait-and-see stance of the Council of Nationalities , Anuarbek Alimzhanov, the chairman of the chamber, noted that a meeting is to take place in Ashkhabad today among the leaders of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan at which they plan to discuss the documents adopted in Minsk. There is good cause to wait to see what conclusions are reached by the heads of the five sovereign states, he stated. He added that on 14 December there will be another meeting in Alma-Ata involving the same participants, but this time the leaders of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine will also participate.

Anuarbek Alimzhanov denied a media report that the Kyrgyz president has agreed to sign the Belarussian agreements, and that the president of Kazakhstan is also inclined to do this. "I am authorized to say that, in addressing their parliaments, neither of the presidents have made promises of this nature," said Alimzhanov, noting that this does not indicate any opposition on their part to the Brest agreements. He did not rule out the possibility that both presidents may make a joint statement in this regard.

It is Alimzhanov's opinion that Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine cannot decide for all the peoples of the Soviet Union. He expressed regret that haste has been shown in such truly historic matters, with parliaments voting immediately for ratification of the agreements signed in Brest. "It would have been possible for the former republics, now sovereign states, to find mutually acceptable solutions by working together. I am certain that all is not yet lost; it is important to seat ourselves at the negotiating table anew".

'Keen Discussion' Takes Place

LD1212181691 Moscow TASS in English 1754 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondents Nikolay Zheleznov and Ivan Novikov from the Kremlin]

[Text] Moscow December 12 TASS—Deputies to the two houses of the Soviet central parliament, who gathered in the Kremlin on December 12, have exchanged views on the situation that has taken shape in view of the agreement on a Commonwealth of Independent States.

Now that deputies of Belarus and Russia, following its today's decision, have been recalled from the central parliament, "we can hardly expect the normal holding of a USSR Supreme Soviet session," said Anuarbek Alimzhanov, chairman of the Council of Republics.

In addition, a meeting of the presidents of five sovereign states, who participated in the Novo-Ogarevo process, is being held in Ashkhabad. Considering the new situation that has developed in the country, "we should take into account the results of this meeting as well," Alimzhanov said.

Nevertheless a keen discussion ensued. It was initiated, as was expected, by a sponsoring group for the convocation of an extraordinary congress of USSR People's Deputies.

Deputy Vladimir Samarin, head of the group, scathingly criticised the accords reached in Minsk, without keeping from making rude remarks about Boris Yeltsin.

Deputies expressed different points of view on the developments in the country, including the Minsk accords. Speakers dwelt on successors to the legislative bodies of the Union.

Who and in what capacity would become the founder of a new Union—would that be the three republics or each of the former union republics that may act as co-founders? Deputy Anatoliy Sobchak asked in particular.

He recalled that "we should not forget about the future which will call for the establishment of a representative body of Union power, the type of, say, Europarliament". Addresses by central parliament members to the parliaments of the former Union republics are of importance in this respect, Sobchak said.

In this connection deputies suggested that in-depth study of the issues be carried out in the committees of the houses of the central parliament, that the code of central laws that should operate for a transitional period be analysed, and that deputies hold a joint meeting of the houses of parliament next week.

Gorbachev Issues Statement on Deputies' Recall

LD1212182191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1809 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Statement by USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev]

[Text] "The Supreme Soviets of the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic have passed a decision to recall their representatives from the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. In this connection I declare the following:

"Such decisions in the present difficult political and socioeconomic situation in the country are not conducive to the stability of society. Now that the destiny of the state is at stake, all must be done to ensure that decisions on this main issue are considered, balanced and free from error. This can only be done on the basis of constitutionality and normal demcratic process. Haste is impermissible here, for it could have grave consequences for the peoples.

"I call on the parliaments of both republics to reexamine this question."

[Signed] M. Gorbachev

Chairman Says Soviet of Republics 'New Body'

LD1212190791 Alma-Ata Kazakh Radio Network in Kazakh 1050 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] Anuarbek Alimzhanov, chairman of the Soviet of Republics, sent a telegram to the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Moldova, and Azerbaijan.

The telegram says: The upper chamber of the USSR Supreme Soviet under the new composition, the Soviet of Republics, is functioning under the flags of the independent states as a fundamentally new body set up by the will of the Supreme Soviets of the independent states. This is the only interstate representative structure capable today of providing an examination of questions of interest to our peoples on the basis of equality and consensus. The Soviet of Republics supports the restoration and development of relations of peace and good-neighborliness between peoples, and trust and harmony in society. The process of setting up the new interstate Commonwealth based on the will and statements of the republics and the interests of the peoples was held and completed successfully.

Commonwealth Described as 'Wishful Thinking'

LD1212133891 Moscow TASS in English 1324 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Tamara Zamyatina]

[Text] Moscow December 12 TASS—Konstantin Lubenchenko, head of the Soviet parliamentary Council of the Union, has described the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States as wishful thinking.

He also accused the founders of the union of twisting law to justify their move.

In an interview with TASS, Lyubenchenko said Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said on Wednesday [11 December] he "will not address the parliamentary session today. We suggested he make a report on the current political situation, but the president said he wanted to give deputies a chance to determine their own position without any pressure from his side".

Lyubenchenko believes the federal legislature can either quit the political scene and delegate its powers to the commonwealth or preserve itself until a legal basis to abolish federal structures and the centre is worked out.

Speaking about the possibility of creating a Muslim alliance to counterbalance the Slavic union, Lubenchenko said "the east is a delicate issue. But in the economic situation when Central Asian republics are tied to the ruble, their integration will hardly help solve their problems".

Deputy Says Legislature 'Virtually' Ceases

LD1212194591 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1800 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] The USSR Supreme Soviet has virtually ceased to exist, said USSR People's Deputy Sergey Tsyplyayev in an interview to our parliamentary correspondent Yevgeniy Zherebenkov. We present this interview for your attention:

[Begin recording] [Zherebenkov] Sergey, what do you think of the results of today's debate in the Russian parliament?

[Tsyplyayev] Generally speaking, I expected these results and I have hopes that we shall succeed in getting over these troubled times and can get down to normal work on building Russian statehood and building a new Commonwealth of Independent States. Those ideas which were approved by parliament today—well, I spoke in favor of them. Today a federation—even a confederation—is, generally speaking, political extremism, and the maximum which we can count on and which we shall probably achieve is to create a Commonwealth of Independent States.

[Zherebenkov] How do you see the future of the Union deputies? In other words, how will the Union parliament work from now on, and will it, indeed, work at all?

[Tsyplyayev] Once the Russian parliament adopted its decision to recall the Russian deputies' group from both chambers, the parliament is no longer able to work, since in the Soviet of the Union our deputation amounted to approximately three-quarters. From that moment no decision can be adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. In other words, it has virtually ceased to exist. At this point our historic mission has ended.

[Zherebenkov] Has President Gorbachev's historic mission come to an end, too ?

[Tsyplayev] Yes, I think so, and if I were in his place I would now make a statement of my resignation. Recent events this fall have made the role of the center, the Supreme Soviet, and the president rather symbolic, and I think that anyone at such a time would be tired of playing the role of a symbol of the state.[end recording]

Political & Social

Gorbachev Holds News Conference on Events

LD1212225391 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2055 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Meeting between USSR President Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev and reporters in Moscow on 12 December—recorded]

[Text] [video shows caption "A Meeting Between M. S. Gorbachev and Journalists," followed by Gorbachev, flanked by Shakhnazarov, talking to journalists] [Gorbachev] Events are developing so quickly here that, on the whole, I think that the conversation should move in the direction of today's ideas and the central events taking place. The thoughts of all the press are focused on this. Society is talking about this right now. I will say frankly that society is tormented by the lack of organization in life. Society is fed up now with politicians. They say this openly. They are waiting for practical steps. We are getting ourselves into a situation from which dictatorships normally grow in one form or another. Remember how Hitler gained points, how he emerged victorious in his campaign, and how Mussolini came to power. Franco came out of the civil war bloody, but he also held on for several years.

In other words, these conditions of schism and confrontation give birth to authoratitive structures and throw up the type of politicians which by no means correspond to the plans we have as the basis for our democratic transformations. This is the case if one conjectures that the situation here will develop in this manner. If that is the case, then everything has gone to the devil.

Moscow is full of rumors about a coup, a military coup. This is absolutely, genuinely a rumor that has no grounds whatsoever. The powers that be today are not interested in a coup. They are democrats who hold power and who intend to transform society. I think the rumors are nothing. It is the democrats who will change things—and I think that this is the case, despite all the critical remarks aimed at such people today—and I count myself as one of them. Neither I nor others plan to take the coup path. I am convinced. That is one point. Second, the reactionaries, the conservatives, who were defeated and who are consolidating, are undertaking attempts at a military coup, but the Army will not follow them.

You probably have noticed that both long ago and since the putsch, I have tried to bring about and have submitted resolutions saying that the topic of the Union treaty should not be an afterthought, but should be featured as the main item on the agenda. I always drag it out from the end of a resolution and make it the first item. But this is a matter for politicians. Let the political process develop within the framework of what is constitutional, and, in the final analysis, let the people make the choice.

Boris Nikolayevich, myself, and my experts started to work. We came up with a draft, which I circulated. We came up with a second draft. On 14 November, we agreed on everything. There was a discussion on 14 November. The origins appeared then. The main discussion took place then. We talked for four hours about what the world and this society needs; whether it needs a different, renewed, or reformed union state—but a state nevertheless, or it must be a union in some form or a commonwealth. All of these ideas were around in our work. The most important discussion was held then. We talked for four hours about this. As soon as the discussion ended, with our concluding that there must be a Union state, everything was agreed quickly. We agreed to initial it.

On 25 November, under the impact of the processes occurring in Ukraine on the eve of the referendum that was about to take place, the topic arose once again. I adduced all the arguments. That was the very moment I said: Well, all right, then, I understand and respect your position, if your final choice is that you think that we must abandon the union state, even a reformed one, and must switch over to a new one. That is your choice. I ask you to take advice. I took all my aides, I took the ministers who were taking part in the process, and walked out. I left the republican leaders to deliberate. Some time later, Boris Nikolayevich and Shushkevich came to my office in Novo-Ogarevo. They had drawn up the text of a proposal for a State Council decision. I made my comments. They agreed. I returned. We resumed, and everyone signed that State Council decision.

I do not think that the Ukraine is the point. The Ukrainian factor was used by the leadership of Russia, the leadership of Russia. Their position has been known for a long time. This is the card that was played here.

Fine. All this took place. I will not mention now what I said in my statement giving my legal and political assessment. I will gloss over for now the fact that we have declared that the Union does not exist any more. I will gloss over the fact that laws are no longer in force. This means that we are no longer a state and that as a whole we have no borders, we have nothing. Everyone is outside the law now, because the main institutions are regulated by Union legislation. Finally, all the Union bodies are ceasing to operate.

This reminds me of the well-known hero who decided to close down America [reference to Mayakovskiy's "Christopher Columbus," in which one of the characters says: "I would shut America and slightly clean it, and then I would reopen it anew."] I said so. Nevertheless, I tried to consult with my colleagues very carefully. I got all my comrades together to seek their advice. Yakovlev, Shevardnadze—the two Yakovlevs—and Bakatin, Primakov, and Shakhnazarov. I called in lawyers, and my state counsellor, another Yakovlev—Yakovlev No. 3—and others. We spent several hours thoroughly discussing it.

What is constructive in this? What is constructive is that through this agreement the Ukraine joined the treaty process in search of.... [Gorbachev changes thought] This is very important. But there is no state, and that has a multitude of consequences. There is no Union citizenship. I spoke to Boris Nikolayevich when we met on 9 December. We spoke on the eve of his trip to Minsk. We discussed things. I kept citing additional arguments. He said: What about the Ukraine? Can you guarantee that the Ukraine will be in the treaty? I already could sense that there were secret schemes afoot and certain premises behind this. When I saw that Shakhray and Burbulis had gone, everything fell into place. It is Burbulis' blueprint. At some stage he wrote a memorandum. I have it. It made the rounds. I daresay you have seen it. It was marked strictly confidential. What, briefly, is the gist of the memorandum? It is that Russia already had lost half of what it gained after the August putsch. Cunning Gorbachev is weaving nets, wanting to restore the old center in the eyes of the world. The republics unfavorably disposed to Russia will back him. The process has to be stopped. The Yavlinskiy plan involved a strong center, and so on. Our plan is as follows: independent republics, or rather states, and a soft union for the divorce proceedings—not in order to cooperate, but to strengthen independence.

Well, there you have it. That is the idea they took with them to their meeting.

[Unidentified reporter off screen] [words indistinct]

[Gorbachev] I already had observed this for myself. Therefore, I insisted that we all discuss this. Boris Nikolayevich, I asked, how can you draw Ukraine into this process? The very first step that must be taken is to discuss and sign the treaty, I said. My most important task is to compel you to be the first to sign. First and foremost, I have to convince you that the Russians must discuss and sign it first. Then Ukraine will seek a place for itself. We can not get away from this. Such is reality. Eight republics will sign. Everything has been agreed. Everybody has a copy. Let's act.

But that did not happen. I already had an idea why: because the Russian leadership objected to a center that has long ceased to exist. Everything, generally speaking, already has reverted to Russia. All that remained was what, in general, should remain in this Union state for the common good, things that are in the interests of these republics.

That is today's reality. I am not making any tragedy out of this. It is just that everything has to be taken to its logical conclusion and be properly thought out. What will happen if we unsettle things and act so hastily? I asked Boris Nikolayevich a question. Let's use a simple question, I said. What about citizenship, Boris Nikolayevich? Does the commonwealth have citizenship? No, they are independent states, aren't they? was his reply. How is that going to work, I asked. I then asked him a more specific question. At the meeting with the military—and some of you attended it—you saw me ask the commander of the Kiev District to stand up.

[Unidentified reporters off screen] [words indistinct]

[Gorbachev] Yes. I asked the commander of the Kiev District a question. Is it correct that 80 percent of the officers and generals in the Kiev District are currently Russians, I asked? Yes, comrade president, he said, that is correct. Tomorrow we will have a situation in which this 80 percent, all of them Russians, will be commanding foreign armed forces. The border guards are another example. They have their own traditions now. These have taken shape over generations. Whole families have served with them, in fact. What will happen tomorrow on the Azerbaijani border, or the Georgian border—it does not matter which. It all used to be our border. Tomorrow this border will be guarded by citizens of a different nationality. You cannot serve there. This is the start of dislocation.

In other words, no matter what question you take, it all begins to look very complicated. Just look at borders—there are none within the Union state. They are purely administrative borders. We only have one border. Now they are all becoming independent states. What is going to happen to the borders? There is now a problem of borders. There is the problem of the Army.

I am afraid that we are laying a bomb under this commowwealth, under this community, which will go off, you see. That is my concern. I am putting this bluntly.

Incidentally, there is a reason I am saying all this. You see, I was told that in Ukraine, changes on citizenship already have been introduced into the written agreement. The document provision saying that citizens have the right to free movement already has been taken out and replaced with another formula. The fact is that I do not feel I have the right....[Gorbachev changes thought] We are beginning to pull apart that which took 10 centuries to take shape. That is why I said that I cannot ignore the referendum that took place, so I quoted it. The congress passed a decision on a referendum and gave it its blessing. I have said that there are possible options. In other words, I offered various options to society. Let it think with no pressure on it. I do not want to put any pressure, but I have expressed and will be expressing my point of view, because I am convinced that we are committing an error which is the most serious in all the years of perestroyka.

[Unidentified reporter] Mikhail Sergeyevich, all these....

[Gorbachev, interrupting] Of course, if that happens, it will be precisely the instance about which I said: I will resign in one case only—if the idea of a union state is abandoned. If, at some stage, I see that this process receives the support of all republics, that is when I will not feel obliged any longer to stay in my post; that is when I will raise that issue. That is, frankly, my full position with all its nuances.

I think that now is the time to speak openly about everything. No one is more concerned than I that our cause must not be defeated. Therefore, I only hope that I am wrong. What else can matter but that our cause triumphs in the long run. Therefore, that is not a personal question for me. But I am convinced [word indistinct]. I think that you understand that I have to come to terms with your views and convictions, and you must understand that it is not a matter of Gorbachev having become stubborn. You know that Gorbachev is able to compromise and choose his path and all, but there are things I have to analyze and analyze, and upon which I have to reflect.

I only hope that I am wrong. I want to be wrong. Kravchuk has put this more clearly. He said that we began to pull down the Union in 1985. That is very interesting. Think about it, you thinking media people. Kravchuk said that we began to pull down the Union in 1985. Ukrainian deputies: This is special homework for you. If this is so, I think....[Gorbachev changes thought] I have stopped to think about the issue.

What are the mechanisms of its functioning? You saw that they cannot be found there. The mechanisms of how the community functions are not to be seen there. So what next? How can it be brought into operation? How?

[Shakhnazarov] Minsk will be the capital.

[Gorbachev] Sorry? The main mechanism will be in Minsk? And what will there be in Minsk?

[Shakhnazarov] The capital.

[Gorbachev] And what will there be in the capital?

[Shakhnazarov] I don't know.

[Gorbachev] Well, I am also asking this. I had a conversation with Boris Nikolayevich yesterday for one and a half hours—we actually had our customary calm conversation, as we always have had in the last (?seven years), so to speak. We had a normal conversation. I understood that he also does not know what there will be in Minsk. But he already has said today—I have been told that he said that not everything will be in Minsk alone. There will be something in Moscow as well.

There is no parliament. It has disappeared. What does all this mean? The EC has two parliaments: the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly, whereas here, there is a complete....[Gorbachev changes thought] It appears that executive power predominates over everything, over all democracy and, so to speak, takes control over everything. It looks like the democrats are not very much tuned into democracy. And then, you see, the EC was a European Economic Community, and now a political union has been declared. As for us....[pauses]

[Shakhnazarov] They have even renamed themselves—they call it the European Union.

[Gorbachev] Yes, well, this is a political (?union). The thing is that they fought for this. Kohl said that if a political union is not created, if foreign affairs are not coordinated, he would not sign. This is what went on there, so to speak. Well, all the same, the role of Ukraine there was played by Great Britain. [laughter] But still, they mananged to come to an agreement. And incidentally, it said it had signed the agreement, but had reservations on some points. This is precisely what I meant to say—that the treaty should be signed, and that there could be reservations on some points. This is what should have been done. All this would have worked out in a normal way.

But a different thing, a different thing happened here. But, never mind. If something has to be done—if something has to be done to get things going, well, I would like to say again: Let's hope, let's hope. I nevertheless consider myself to be a convinced democrat. I would like to be, at all the most acute stages when—even when my hands and my feet were tied, so to speak. Nevertheless, I did not go beyond some certain limits. The thing is that one has a state of affairs where the left and right put on airs, yet they are not able to sort things out. The press is completely lost in all this. That is why it will take a long time before we and you sort things out.

Well, maybe I will have a lot of free time in the near future, and then I will sort things out myself. [laughter] Sort out what? That Gorbachev was so many times entrusted with emergency powers, and that not once did he use them, not once did he use them. You should bear this in mind. I am in favor of society making its choice consciously. You know, there is a kind of hastiness in this. Well, I have said this, and I would like to repeat it: I cannot change my stance—while taking into account self-criticism of my approaches, of the position I occupy—because a great mistake is being committed, you understand. We are destroying the state, whereas it should be reformed. This is a complex world that already has been shaped. To begin reshaping it—where are the scissors to be found that can do this? And generally speaking, on what grounds is this being done? Who has the right to do this? Jesus Christ would not be able to divide up our society—it has become intermixed.

You see, I am not listing everything which is in our society now. Seventy-five million people outside the areas of their ethnic entities. Defense. So, defense—you know it also depends on certain Baltic communications and installations. Strategic defense. It must not be broken up. Science. You know that as soon as something is broken up through the academy, a disintegration process starts, and the whole center perishes. They cannot live on the basis of just cooperation. Well, and the main thing. Our level of cooperation, our level of cooperation is almost one and a half to two times higher than in the European Community.

Do you understand? We have dashed in, intoxicated, and for some reason are losing our heads. I have to say this. I cannot fail to say with conviction—you understand this—that it is not an illusion; this is too serious a reality. And leaving unitarianism—which I am burying and, so so speak, am heading this process—we have not managed to stop where it is necessary to stop, and have embarked on breaches, on disintegration, and on breakup. This is what I am talking about. The agreement in Minsk. This is precisely an aversion of collapse. What is it? A chance. But what about the treaty which eight republics were preparing earlier?

[Unidentified correspondent] It didn't work.

[Gorbachev] Well, that may be so.

[Unidentified correspondent] One can blame Yeltsin.

[Gorbachev] Yes. This is why it didn't work.

[Unidentified correspondent] So, Mikhail Sergeyevich....

[Gorbachev] No. I don't want to blame him for this. I don't. I don't. It would be unproductive at the moment. And then, you know, one must not treat society like that. Let them get to the bottom of things and come to a conclusion. I think that all the players have said what their standpoints are. They have announced them. Everything is clear. People see them. This is necessary, and will be necessary tomorrow. I will resign. If the process ends like this, I will resign. That is quite clear. There can be no question here. I am a moral person, although some people are attempting to....[Gorbachev changes thought] Although here I don't see moral elements in the new politicians. And politics without morality, especially at such a level as I have been engaged in it, is a risky business. The rest, yes, the new ones, have abandoned the whole cause. I have been tormented, so to speak, by splits and breakups. The party mauled me, and so did the military industrial complex, and my friends and colleagues of the new union. Everyone. While evincing flexibility, I have nonetheless pulled through the main ideas of perestroyka, including, in all areas, political reform, economic reform, and a multiethnic state.

But, I think that the way we treat the reality which our country represents now—I think our people do not understand yet that they are losing the country. The country will cease to exist. Boris Nikolayevich told me yesterday: For God's sake, do not frighten us with Yugoslavia. Yes. Let us do everything so that it does not happen. In general, this whole story amazed me. Shushkevich telephoned me. For two days I did not have any communication with Boris Nikolayevich, though on the previous day we stayed behind. And this, generally speaking, worried me. It meant there was a process which was under way, and it already did not fit in our contacts. I knew there were talks around. I spoke to one person, and another person, and asked what it was, so to speak. Then Shushkevich telephoned me, and said they had reached an agreement and he wanted to read it to me. What agreement? Why is it you who telephones? We are in Minsk now, and I act as a depositary, as ite were. Wait, have you decided everything already?

[Unidentified correspondent] Was it two days before?

[Gorbachev] No, the telephone call was on 8 December. Our conversation was rather abrupt. He told me that they would be supported, and that they already had spoken to Bush. This is disgraceful. You talk to the President of the United States of America, and you do not talk to the president of the country. It is a shame. It is a disgraceful shame. Simply disgraceful shame. So, this is not a fair game—the moral here. Shushkevich informs me, while Boris Nikolayevich talks to Bush. These are political ambitions. And this already is the influence of separatist forces. Let me say that these are by no means the people's interests, by no means, and these are not national interests. It will be in the national interests that this union state is reformed but preserved. I am sure that this will answer the national interests. Therefore, listen, I would like to ask you very much: analyze it if you want, to check that it is not that I want to do a thing to spite someone. To do so would have been simply humiliating for me, especially on such an issue as the statehood of this country. Now they will start to cut it. I will not participate in this, under any circumstances.

Quite apart from anything else, I find such treatment repugnant. [video shows Gorbachev making abrupt gesture with his right hand to emphasize this point] What right do we have, anyway? The fact that we have a heritage of 60, 70 years—and 10 centuries before that—is being ignored, as well as the fact that people will live in this land for centuries after us, as well. It is as though we are starting to cut this land up like a pie; we've come here to cut up the pie, to have it as a drink with a snack, or a snack with a drink, as it were. No! I will not lower myself to such a thing. Neither my convictions, my ethical code, nor my post allow it.

Well, all right. They've gone and decided everything. They signed an agreement and went their separate ways. Generally speaking, I feel that the proper thing to do would be to let the people decide and give their approval. Have they agreed to the partition of the country or not? Who wants this? Why are they making this decision off the bat? What are referenda for? To decide how to plow, and to what depth?

[Unidentified correspondent] Are you happy?

[Gorbachev] Am I happy? Well, I always thought that was a question to ask of women, or in intimate surroundings, so to speak. I think it has been my fate to take on a great cause. That's all there is to it, I think. If it was not for this, it might be possible for me to think that I had merely lived and existed. Now I think that I....[Gorbachev changes thought] That's all there is to it. It's all in the past now. It's all in the past. The main goal of my life already has been accomplished. The rest—well, maybe other people will come along and do things better. [video shows editing at this point; fragment has Gorbachev saying "...it had to be noted that..." at which point the recording fades out with Gorbachev in midsentence]

[Announcer] We have been broadcasting a short report on the meeting between Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, the country's president, and journalists.

Presidential Spokesman on Gorbachev Actions

Message to Muslim Republics Denied

LD1212174391 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1700 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] Andrey Grachev, head of the USSR president's press center, has refuted rumors that Mikhail Gorbachev has sent some kind of message to the Muslim republics of the former Union, and that the Alfa group intends to seize the Russian parliament. He said in an interview with RIA that the issue is that political forces are engaged in a game in conditions when the future of the country is not clear. They are counting on tension, confrontation and provocations.

Gorbachev To Work 'Hand in Hand'

OW1312130991 Tokyo NHK General Television Network in Japanese 1220 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Interview with Andrei Grachev, spokesman for President Gorbachev, by NHK Moscow Correspondent Kobayashi in the Kremlin on the morning of 13 December; from "NHK News 21" program: Grachev speaks in Russian with simultaneous Japanese translation in subtitles; translated from Japanese—recorded]

[Text] [video shows Grachev sitting on couch in room] President Gorbachev still thinks that the new Union Treaty is the best. If the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] is ratified according to the Constitution, however, the president will not deny it. The president will carry out his duties hand in hand with the new leaders during the transitional period. He will do this to avoid social instability at home and to fulfill the international responsibility of the Soviet Union as a superpower that possesses nuclear weapons.

Further Reaction to Commonwealth Accords

Fate of Shevardnadze, Ministry

OW1312000791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1602 GMT 12 Dec 91

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: "Eduard Shevardnadze To Resign? But When?"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Uncertainty and utter confusion have set in in the USSR Ministry of Foreign Relations. One of the diplomats said that the future of the Union diplomatic service will be discussed by all means during the talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, which are beginning on Sunday [15 December]. It is a matter of international importance, because the U.S. and other countries are painfully trying to answer the question: With whom to establish contacts? But for each of the 2,000 diplomats—young and those who have worked in the Foreign Ministry for many years—it is also a personal problem because they may lose their jobs.

"Perhaps some of us will move to the Russian Foreign Ministry. But what if the subjective factor prevails in choosing diplomats?" complained the head of a department. There are diplomats, however, who have not lost optimism and who think that the latest statements made by Russia's Deputy Premier, Gennadiy Burbulis, were not so categoric about the future of the Union bodies as they were shortly after the signing of the Minsk agreements. Uncertainty persists, however, and no one can work on as before.

Until recently, the building in Smolenskaya Square was in a state of excitement. Even though the State Council's decision to merge the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations envisaged cuts in the personnel from 5,000 to 2,700, [figures as received] it was an improvement from Boris Yeltsin's proposal to cut the number of diplomats ten times. The resignation of Boris Pankin and the appointment of Eduard Shevardnadze made the prospects for the Foreign Ministry's survival even more possible.

Not all of Eduard Shevardnadze's associates believed he was right when he agreed to return to the Foreign Ministry in such a turbulent time. Now the haste in which that fateful dcision was made is becoming obvious. If Eduard Shevardnadze were guided exclusively by his personal interests and motives, he would definitely resign, the more so since he still heads the Soviet Foreign Policy Association and is involved in the Movement for Democratic Reform (on December 12, he attended the meeting of this movement's executive committee). One can hardly talk about other options today because Mr Shevardnadze's closest associates have refuted speculations that on December 9, Gennadiy Burbulis offered him some other place.

To this day, Mr Shevardnadze has not made a single statement concerning the Minsk agreements, with the exception perhaps of a short speech which he made at the Foreign Ministry's collegium and which urged diplomats to continue fulfilling their duties. Some of his colleagues suppose that the foreign minister will be silent till the Movement for Democratic Reform gathers for its congress on December 14 and 15, and works out a general approach to the current events and formulates its attitude to it. Some believe, however, that Mr Shevardnadze does not think it proper to leave the Union ministry, which he has always described as a team with an enormous intellectual potential, in such a critical moment.

Adviser on Legal Aspects

PM1312095991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 12 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[TASS report: "Document Causes Reflection]

[Text] Moscow, 11 Dec —The agreement to create a Commonwealth of Independent States signed by the heads of the Republic of Belarus, the RSFSR and Ukraine has caused an equivocal reaction in the country and the world. At the request of TASS observer L. Yermakova, Veniamin Yakovlev, state counselor to the USSR president for legal policy, comments on this document:

"First of all it should be noted that the agreement has positive, even encouraging features. It is no secret that Ukraine's recent nonparticipation in the treaty process alarmed many people. The agreement that has now been signed is quite close to the draft Union treaty in many points of departure. It reflects the desire to create a common economic and political area and to decide by peaceful methods difficult questions such as the safeguarding of human rights and equality among citizens irrespective of their ethnic origin. The agreement says that it is open to the other states to join it. And not only those existing within the current Union's framework but also those that are not part of it.

"There are no grounds for interpreting the document as a treaty between three republics that wish to stand apart. If other republics join the agreement and if mutual enrichment of the two documents takes place, then maybe it would not be necessary to create problems and think that something tragic is occurring.

"At the same time the document causes reflection and even bewilderment. It contains destructive as well as constructive features. It states that the USSR ceases to exist as a subject of international law and a geopolitical reality. The application of the norms of third states, including the former USSR, is not permitted on the territories of the states that have signed the agreement. The activity of the former Union's organs is also ceasing. This also causes bewilderment of a legal nature. I will mention just a few points.

"The Union can be terminated only by the will of all the states forming it. Legally the 12 republics are the subjects of the Union, although some of them do not consider themselves to be such. Consequently, three republics cannot decide the fate of a community of 12. True, they say that Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine are the Union's founders. But, first, there were four founders, and second, the other republics that joined the Union acquired equal status with them. Moreover, under all constitutions—Union and republic—every republic can decide to secede from the Union but not to terminate it.

"The 1922 Union Treaty says: The approval, alteration, and supplementing of the Union Treaty is under the exclusive jurisdiction of the USSR Congress. Thus the decision to disband the Union cannot be made by the leaders of three or even all republics. This is precisely why the USSR president was forced to raise the question of convening a congress of USSR people's deputies.

"It must also be borne in mind that a sharp 'rupture' in the functioning of the country's organs and laws will entail extremely grave consequences. The legislation regulating our economic life is predominantly union legislation. Republic legislation is only just coming into being. Therefore relations concerning deliveries of products, transport shipments, power supply, and so on exist within the framework of union laws. If we declare them invalid, a legal vacuum will be created. The same thing will happen, for example, with the Army and citizenship. Survival and security considerations require that there are union rules. The international legal aspect likewise requires continuity. A gradual transformation of the old Union into the new is needed. This smoothness is not guaranteed by the 'agreement between the three.'"

"But we will hope," Yakovlev concluded, "that the republics, realizing the whole complexity of the situation, will find a suitable solution to the situation. The aim is not for the Union to disintegrate into groups of states which oppose each other but for a new Union to appear in place of the old."

'Last Hope' Out of 'Quagmire'

PM1212153491 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Commentary by Vladimir Kuznechevskiy under the general heading "Commonwealth of Independent States: The Beginning": "Minsk Agreements: Bridge Over the Abyss"]

[Text] There have been (and still are) plenty of formulas for saving our country from tragic collapse. Not one of them has yielded healthy shoots in the long and painful years of perestroyka. And therefore I believe that in Minsk on 8 December 1991 the leaders of the three Slav states proposed not just another formula for "saving the Fatherland," but the only realistic way out of the historical impasse in present conditions. And they were prompted to do this not by debates in the halls of sessions of the people's deputies, but by the ominous silence of the peoples of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine, a silence that had reached the brink of an invisible precipice. The specter of "Croatization" of the Soviet Union, with all the bloody consequences of this phenomenon, has in recent days been increasingly present in the mass media. The political leaders could not wait for the people's silence to turn into action: The precipice was too close.

Which aspects of our country's development (if you can call a collapse "development") worried us most of all? And not only us, incidentally, but the West too. There are three main aspects. The destruction of the single economic area (the breaking of horizontal links between economic entities, the decline in production, and the consequent sharp deterioration in the population's living standard), the threat of the loss of control over the nuclear weapons sited on the territory of four republics (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine), and the growing instability in the single (as yet) organism of the Armed Forces, manifested in the sharp decline in the social status of the military in society and the even sharper decline in the living standard of defenders of the Fatherland.

It was against this, mainly, that the leaders of the three Slav republics tried to build a barrier. To preserve a common economic area (a coordinated financial and banking policy, the ruble as the basic monetary unit, coordinated implementation of radical economic reforms, and so forth) is to normalize the economy and first stabilize and then boost the population's standard of living. That is the object of the Minsk Agreements. Add to that the reciprocal undertakings on guaranteeing equal rights to all national minorities on their territories, and it becomes clear that in Minsk a practical step was taken to resolve national discord on more than 80 percent of the territory of the former USSR.

Unified control of nuclear weapons, a united common command of the Armed Forces, combined with priority attention to the material and social well-being of personnel in the context of effective measures to reduce the Army—all this is enshrined in the agreement of the three. And that is the maximum that could be done in the difficult circumstances that had arisen.

However, the implementation of the Minsk Agreements, from the very first hours of their existence, has come up against vigorous resistance from those who would prefer to go on looking for formulas to save their beloved Fatherland and continue along a road well trodden in the perestroyka years. Voices can be heard, for instance, trying to exaggerate the ethnic side of the Minsk Agreements. But if a Slav union has been created in Belarus, is that the point? Is it a Slav union anyway? Nearly one-sixth of Russia's population are ethnically not Slavs. Do they have different ideas from the Slavs today? And is it not true that the proclaimed Commonwealth is open in nature and that Muslim republic-states interested in economic recovery can also join it, either individually or collectively? Or do the Muslim republic-states have no interest in guaranteeing the rights of their compatriots living in Russia? Do the peoples living there want civil war? No, of course not! In this context one cannot ignore the position of Kazakh President N. Nazarbayev, who, despite his mixed reaction, said: "I see nothing unnatural in the Minsk Agreement. Apart from two or three points that must be clarified. A confederative union of states is perfectly possible. And it is no use speculating on the theme of confrontation between the Slav and the Asian republics." Precisely!

There are other objections too. A group of USSR people's deputies, supported by the Union president, has put forward a proposal to convene an Extraordinary Congress of USSR People's Deputies, which would adopt "decisions on the restoration of constitutional order throughout the territory of the USSR." What is that but an attempt in effect to revive the aspirations of the leaders of the August putsch?!

One last point. Were the participants in the Minsk Agreements entitled to record the ending of the existence of the USSR as an entity in international law and a geopolitical reality? Anyone who has read the December 1922 document knows that they are so entitled. Because the Minsk Agreements were signed by the very same entities that created the USSR. True, there was another one too—the Transcaucasian Federation. But it ceased to exist as such back in the thirties.

A commonwealth of equals is our last hope of clambering out of the quagmire into which we were led by the senseless and inhuman policy of bolshevism, which began, as is well known, not in 1922, but in 1917.

'Third Force' Envisioned

PM1312105991 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 12 Dec 91 p 1

[Report by D. Muratov under the "Rumor No. 1" rubric: "How Gorbachev Wanted To Arrest Yeltsin Without Knowing About It"]

[Text] I left for what proved to be a strange meeting at 1900 hours 10 December after receiving a telephone call. In a quiet public garden a young man, with my agreement, transferred my dictaphone to his coat pocket and, for propriety's sake, checked your correspondent's pockets as though searching me for a second "recording device." Meanwhile, on the sidewalk opposite another man was ostentatiously pacing up and down, checking to see whether we were being "tailed," thereby modestly giving our meeting a particularly confidential character.

The young man (I shall call him the Source) gave me the following information: At about 0900 hours on 9 December the Interrepublic Security Service (KGB)'s "A" group (known as the "Alpha" group after the August events, which have been somewhat eclipsed this week) was placed on full combat readiness and in response to a code number signal on a monitor screen its main forces went into the Kremlin.

The group, as is well known, is now under dual subordination—to Yeltsin and Gorbachev—and is used as the presidents' bodyguard.

According to the Source, a number of MAZ trucks loaded with concrete slabs went to the Kremlin to seal off the gates, which have not seen fighting for a long time. The Source said the sole reason for all these preparations was that Gorbachev wanted to detain Yeltsin, Kravchuk, and Shushkevich so as to establish who has the copyright to the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Together with the author of the extremely risky sensational information in the garden there was also a representative of a well known commercial firm—especially well known to subway passengers. He handed over a statement from the firm's chairman. The statement claimed: A second attempt to seize the republic leaders is planned for 12 December.

We spent several hours checking out the Source in the public garden to find out whether he was spinning us a yarn. Unfortunately, the Source indeed proved to be polluted.

Alpha had not added any extra men to reinforce the conventional bodyguard. There were still 10 men in the Kremlin.

There are no MAZ trucks in the Kremlin grounds. Nor were there any. (If there were any they surely would not be trucks from MAZ—the Minsk Truck Plant—D.M.) According to the official records, Kravchuk and Shushkevich were not due in Moscow at all.

Similarly all the other details of this exciting yarn failed to check out.

Subsequently events developed even more curiously. We found out that the president of the firm who had put us in touch with the Source paid a brief unofficial visit to the Embassies of the United States, Britain, Germany, and the State of Lithuania on the evening of 10 December together with his bodyguard. He gave them the same information as we received. The reason: concern for his business if things explode.

That was not all. As agreed beforehand, the Source called the editorial office again yesterday evening. My assessment of the caller's competence was not unduly high. When I rebuked him, saying either you are messing around with us or they are messing around with you, the Source thought for a moment and then accepted the second suggestion.

In short, we were dealing with a vigorous but crude game of information "reconnaissance in force." In the past few days the chief of TASS received a call on the government phone and an authoritative voice dictated to him the text of Gorbachev's letter to the Central Asian republics demanding support—the president's greeting to the conference of Muslim countries in Dakar was used as the basis of another forgery.

Rumors of possible terrorist acts against state officials are circulating via the radio and press in the provinces.

During their meeting yesterday Yeltsin and Gorbachev discussed this question. Neither has information to suggest that they are planning attempts on each other's life.

In my opinion, we are beginning to deal with a "third force" operating behind the scenes. By getting Yeltsin and Gorbachev to cancel one another out and creating a situation of confusion, that force can clear a small space for itself in the Kremlin.

Undoubtedly there is an accommodation problem in the corridors of power. All I want to know is: Which firms want to buy up those offices and at which auctions. Well, we shall see... Watch this space. No problems?

Alksnis Suggests Gorbachev Emigrate

OW1312062691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1710 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] USSR People's Deputy Colonel Victor Alknis sees the de-facto removal from power of Mikhail Gorbachev as the best result of the agreements made in Belarus. He hopes that, stripped of his presidential immunity, Gorbachev will have to answer a number of criminal charges. He did not rule out an attempt to assassinate Gorbachev. "The best thing he can do today," advised Alksnis, "is to emigrate as soon as possible."

Concerns With Guarding of Borders Addressed

Committee Established

PM1012084991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 7 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Interview with Major General Viktor Zemtsov, border troops deputy chief of staff, by TASS correspondent Ye. Znamenskiy under the "Direct Line" rubric; date and place not specified: "Border Still Has To Be Guarded"]

[Text] With the adoption of the USSR presidential decree ratifying the provisional statute on the Committee To Guard the USSR State Border, this organ has acquired legal status. Major General Viktor Zemtsov, border troops deputy chief of staff, tells a TASS correspondent about the committee's aims and powers:

[Zemtsov] The committee is an interrepublic organ of state management defending the interests of the Union and the sovereign republics within it on the border and in the economic zone. All its activity will be carried out within the limits of the powers delegated by the sovereign republics (states). The committee is responsible for ensuring border policy coordinated with the republics and the effective leadership of all types of activity by border troops.

One important area of the committee's activity will be for it to help Union and republic customs and law-enforcement organs, and also environmental and public organizations to protect citizens and the natural environment in border areas, in territorial and inland waters, and in the economic zone.

The unified border troop command, which, in addition to the troops' supreme leadership, incorporates representatives of central and republic state power, is to be made responsible for organizing and supervising the practical implementation of Union and sovereign republic legislative and other normative acts and international treaties on border questions. This organ is also responsible for ensuring border troops' combat and mobilization readiness and inspecting formations and units.

The committee and the border troops will be funded with money from the Union budget and Union funds.

Situation Observed

PM1212163391 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 11 Dec 91 p 1

[Report by S. Frolov: "Stop! What Have You Got There?"]

[Text] ...Despite everything, the 60,000 km of our borders continue to be guarded, and it looks like new ones will soon be added to these thousands of kilometers.

On the one hand, customs checkpoints are being erected within the union of sovereign states [USS]: 25 checkpoints have been opened on Moldova's border with Ukraine. Some 500 km of common borders are being monitored in order to prevent the export of scarce goods by either side. True, this is only being done in the daytime. Cossack border troop detachments are being posted on the Stavropol and Kuban border with the northern Caucasus. Turkmenia is forming its own customs service, and borders are being established between Georgia and Russia.

On the other hand, the republics situated on the country's periphery are trying in every possible way to simplify the procedure for crossing the border with neighboring countries, admittedly, only for their own people. But here unexpected contradictions are arising. For example, Belarus has simplified the procedure for drawing up documents for travel to Poland, but the local authorities in Grodno and Brest have simply closed the checkpoints to those leaving on tourist and private visas.

On the whole relative quiet can be observed on the external borders. The restless Romanians have left Vyborg, and the obliging Finns, devotees of the local cheap currency bars, are moving in there now.

The Baltic states are feverishly getting rid of rubles, buying up absolutely anything at any price. Officially the customs posts on the border with the Union are tempering their ardor, but they are only situated on the central highways. Checks on the smaller roads are are being made rather sporadically, which is why all the forest paths have recently turned into well-worn roads.

New Justice Party Established, Aims Viewed

PM1212111591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 7 Dec 91 p 2

[Report by A. Shinkin under the "At Parties, Movements" rubric: "One More Attempt"]

[Text] The banning of the CPSU has once again confirmed the old truism that nature abhors a vacuum. New public organizations of various kinds are continually springing up to fill the place vacated by the Communist Party.

The Justice Party is one of them. Its organizers reckon that the new movement's main aim is to create the conditions necessary for the happiness of each person and the whole people. This aim can be achieved, in their opinion, in a truly democratic, rule-of-law state of social justice.

The new party does not deny private ownership, but at the same time thinks all forms of exploitation inadmissible. Personal wealth must be based solely on honest, personal labor. The state must guarantee all citizens capable of working their right to work.

The new party considers strict observance of rights and freedom for the individual to be the requisite condition for the development of society.

Those are characteristic features of the emergent party. Regrettably, they must be recognized as familiar features. However, I. Starodubskiy, a member of the organizational committee, responded to that comment as follows: "We are the party of the grassroots. That is why the future belongs to us."

The party still has no sponsors or a large number of supporters. But it is quite possible that they will appear soon. Since in our country, with its age-old desire for equality and justice, their appeals and slogans may resemble the mustard seed which, the Holy Scripture says, although smaller than all other seeds, is bigger than all the rest when it does grow.

The Justice Party organizational committee's telephone number is: 570-27-82.

Party Appeals to Gorbachev To Intervene

LD1312115891 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1600 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] A coordinating council of the Democratic Russia Movement has sent yet another appeal. This movement has dissolved into a number of components. Travkin's party, the Democratic Party of Russia, has completely left the Democratic Russia Movement. A number of other parties and movements have expressed their disagreement with the activities of the coordinating council.

Here are parts of a document we received today:

This is an appeal to the USSR president: Under the system of dual authority that has taken shape—with the mayor and the Moscow Government on one hand, and the Moscow City Soviet and rayon soviets on the other hand—no decisive steps toward a transition to market relations are possible. This is what the coordinating council thinks.

The decisions by the Moscow City Soviet revoking orders by the mayor of Moscow on the privatization of trade, public catering, public facilities, and the accommodation fund are called a step toward a possible catastrophe. Privatization has been virtually blocked, and people are forming the impression that the radical reform policies of the Russian Government are to blame.

The coordinating council requests, even demands, that the USSR president urgently intervene in the situation that has taken shape. It is extremely important that the powers of the executive and representative authorities at all levels be distinctly delimited, so that reforms may be carried out without delay and in a coordinated fashion.

This is signed by the coordinating council of the Democratic Russia Movement.

Ministry Accounts To Be 'Temporarily Reopened'

*OW1012025491 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1945 GMT 9 Dec 91*

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Accounts of the scrapped Union ministries will be temporarily re-opened to finance the enterprises accountable to them and public amenities on the territories of the ex-Soviet republics. This decision was taken Monday [9 December] evening at a Moscow sitting of the Council of Heads of Governments of the Sovereign Republics that represents the ex-Soviet countries. The ministries' bank accounts were frozen last month after the Russian leadership announced the reorganisation of the structures, governing the industry, on its territory.

The Monday decision signifies that workers at the enterprises under the Union jurisdiction will draw wages in December from the credits extended by the USSR State Bank. It is expected that beginning in January 1992 these enterprises will be financed from the republican budgets.

Andrey Zverev, director of the budget department of the Interstate Economic Committee, said in an interview with IF [INTERFAX] that all expenditure harmonized with the republics will follow the scheme proposed by the RSFSR government. The Russian Economics and Finance Ministry will become a mediator between the former Union and the ex-Soviet republics and will sign a credit agreement with the USSR State Bank.

Russia's representative at the committee Vladimir Mashits also said that Russia had agreed to have the accounts opened and the credits extended after the republics had agreed to enter the credit expenditures on the domestic debt of these republics.

Deputy Comments on Georgian, Chechen Leaders

*LD1012163191 Moscow TASS in English
1511 GMT 10 Dec 91*

[Text] Moscow December 10 TASS—"The images of Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Chechen President Dzokhar Dudayev have been obviously distorted by the press, which describes them as intransigent nationalitic leaders," USSR People's Deputy Anatoliy Denisov told the newspaper "PRAVDA" today. As chairman of the recently formed Moscow Spiritual Centre for Moral Revival, he recently met the leaders of these two republics in the Caucasus and was quite favourably impressed by them.

"They are very sober politicians, and they do not adhere to anything that is unacceptable to their opponents. It is another matter that their stands sometimes give rise to objections. But everything should be settled through negotiations and mutually acceptable compromises. I am absolutely sure that this is possible, of course, given a sincere desire to achieve a settlement and genuine respect for one's partner," Denisov notes.

"No matter how unpleasant this may be for the centre, the problem now runs up against the recognition of Georgian independence," he claims. "After the recognition of the independence of Baltic states, and now of Ukraine, there is no sense in denying a similar right to the Caucasian republics. Let each of them get the status it desires. We must not forget that state independence presupposes not only corresponding rights and pluses, but also obligations and minuses. The main problem, linked with Georgia, is that human rights are now being violated there and attempts are being made to enforce one's will on individuals, let alone whole nations, through repressions and terror."

"As to the Chechen Republic, the violations of the law, ascribed to General Dudayev, "have repeated in many cases the tactics of Yeltsin, who also disregarded the law and the constitution, both federal and Russian, in order to strengthen his positions," Denisov says. "In any case, Dudayev's movement is not nationalistic or anti-Russian, but rather an essentially anti-oligarchic one."

"Until late," Denisov explains, "the former Checheno-Ingushetia was actually ruled by major tribes, whose representatives shared among themselves all the spheres of influence. Bribery and corruption were rife. The state apparatus began to lose power when Dudayev appeared on the scene. People heaved a sigh of relief and rushed to the support of their president. The seeming Russian-Chechen confrontation is explained by the fact that representatives of former elite groups, who have moved up to important posts in Russian state bodies, are going out of their way to restore their traditional power in the Chechen Republic."

TASS Carries Press Review for 13 Dec

*LD1312080391 Moscow TASS in English
0702 GMT 13 Dec 91*

["Soviet Press Review"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow December 13 TASS—Today's newspapers continue to carry reports about the ratification by the Russian parliament of the agreement signed by the presidents of Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia [Belarus] to form a commonwealth of independent states.

"Yesterday, the Russian parliament discussed without an exaggeration a historic issue on the formation of the commonwealth of independent states," the newspaper PRAVDA reports.

It said the talks in Belorussia "have become a natural consequence of the processes that have been going on" in the country.

The Russian parliament ratified by a majority of votes the agreement of the three Slavic republics, the Soviet youth daily KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA said.

Newspapers carry excerpts from Russian Republic President Boris Yeltsin's speech at the parliament on Thursday [12 December].

The SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA newspaper in the article "Mikhail Gorbachev agrees but doubts" tells about a meeting between the Soviet president and representatives of the mass media in the Kremlin on Thursday.

"The society should make a conscientious choice. I can't shake an impression that the state is being ruined," Gorbachev said.

He stressed he will do his best to allow people to make their choice within the constitutional framework.

The newspaper RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA publishes the article "Belorussia [Belarus], Ukraine and Russia Ratify the Agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States. Who Is Next?," in which it comments on the agreement.

Newspapers also report that the Russian parliament on Thursday annulled the 1922 Union Treaty founding the Soviet Union.

Newspapers report the Soviet parliament on Thursday decided to refrain from discussing the agreement on the commonwealth of independent states until other five republics, which participated in discussions of the Union Treaty in Novo-Ogarevo, announce their positions on the issue.

"If the agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States is the first step, perhaps even a little step to restore the lost integrity of the country, we should welcome any integrating, centripetal movement. But we should also remember about legal and moral aspects of what is happening," PRAVDA said.

In the article "Star Hour of Mircea Snegur" PRAVDA correspondent Arkadiy Pasechnik points to the Moldovan president's conviction that "any, even the most urgent issues should be solved only by peaceful means".

The decree on the liberalisation of prices signed by Boris Yeltsin has been submitted to the Russian parliament for approval, SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA reports.

The package of documents to be approved by the parliament includes legislative enactments authorising free prices on industrial products and consumer goods, and documents changing the procedure for levying taxes and improving social protection of people.

The newspaper publishes a letter from Deputy Vladimir Nosov, in which he urges the Soviet president to convene a Congress of Soviet People's Deputies to discuss the situation in the country and measures to resolve the crisis.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA carries an article about the position of the Soviet "middle class".

The newspaper stressed social production should be organised not by state bodies but by representatives of the "middle class," who are not "overburdened" with any property but who are trying to obtain it.

In an interview with SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, Sergey Ulanov, deputy head of the inter-republican committee for prices, stressed a "mass of crucial and technical problems" should be solved before the country begins market reforms.

The Soviet military daily KRASNAYA ZVEZDA offers an interview with Igor Yevstafyev, deputy commander of Soviet chemical defence troops. He said the Soviet Union's programme to destroy its chemical weapons cost the country 5,397 billion roubles and 146 million U.S. dollars in 1991. This figure is expected to be as high as 28 billion roubles in 1992, Yevstafyev said (as hyperinflation sets in).

The Soviet trade union daily TRUD carries an interview with Pyotr Mishchenkov, deputy Russian interior minister, in which he tells about the situation in Soviet labour camps and prisons.

Newspapers report former East German leader Erich Honecker is hiding in the Chilean Embassy in Moscow. He has appealed for political asylum in Chile after he was ordered by the Russian Government to leave the country before midnight on Friday.

Newspapers also comment on the situation in Yugoslavia, the Middle East, Latin America and other "hot spots".

Military

Manilov Interviewed on Fate of Armed Forces

LD1212225591 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2123 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Interview with General V.E. Manilov, chief of the Information Directorate of the USSR Defense Ministry, by correspondent G. Sedov; place and date not given; from the "Television News Service" program—live or recorded]

[Text] [Sedov] What is the fate of the Armed Forces today and in the future?

[Manilov] It is necessary to say that in Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's assessment, the conclusion of the treaty on a commonwealth of the three sovereign republics is the first practical step on the way to the conclusion of a defense alliance. This alliance, moreover, will function on the basis of the implementation of the principles of collective security with united command of the common Armed Forces [yedinoye komandovaniye obshchimi vooruzhennymi silami].

[Sedov] Who will finance the Armed Forces?

[Manilov] It is the concern and the affair of all the sovereign republics. All the sovereign republics intend to make their appropriate contribution, so to speak, and evidently they will do so. Regarding Russia, and this came up at Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's meeting with the leadership of the Armed Forces, Russia is undertaking to pay servicemen their financial maintenance with a 90 percent increase, and this will apply to all servicemen, irrespective of where they are serving, on the territory of Russia or anywhere else.

Lobov Dismissal, Declaration Viewed

PM1312100991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 13 Dec 91 p 2

[Article by Aleksandr Chernyak under the "Aloud About Rumors" rubric: "General Lobov Bewildered"]

[Text] Our Presidents M.S. Gorbachev and B.N. Yeltsin have suddenly shown increased interest in the Army. On 10 December Gorbachev visited the Defense Ministry, where he delivered a 50-minute speech to a conference of Armed Forces leading personnel. As the military assert, this is the second time that the president has taken part in such an event. The first time was in summer 1985 after exercises in Belarus.

The president briefly characterized his view of the situation in the country, stressing that a difficult period has now begun because the reforms are proceeding nervously and certain politicians are conducting a separatist, destabilizing course. Mikhail Sergeyevich called for the preservation of the Union, said that everything positive in the Belarussian agreement should be taken and discussed in parliaments, and then a law-based decision should be reached.

His monologue with the military did not develop into a dialogue or conversation, even though the audience had quite a few questions. Clearly, the president is now suffering from an acute shortage of time.

The next morning B.N. Yeltsin met with the military too. He himself asked for this to be regarded as simply a conversation on topical issues worrying the Army. Yeltsin spelled out his view of the trilateral agreement adopted in the Belovezhskaya Forest. But he placed the main emphasis on the social protection of servicemen and their families and confirmed that the question of raising their pay has been resolved.

As we can see, both presidents are seeking the military's support. This also dictated the cadre changes which have taken place in the past few days at the top level of the Armed Forces leadership, as PRAVDA has already written. In that report we raised the question: Why are no explanations being given in this regard, why is everything done in secret? This gives rise to all kinds of rumors and fabrications. There was all sorts of talk, for example, about the dismissal of Chief of the General Staff V. Lobov.

PRAVDA received no reply to its question from officials. But V. Lobov's official statement sheds some light on the proceedings:

"In the past few days I have received many appeals from my voters, colleagues, servicemen, and other citizens asking for an explanation of my departure from the post of first deputy defense minister and chief of the USSR Armed Forces General Staff.

"In that connection I officially state as a USSR People's Deputy:

"In conditions of the obvious disintegration of our state and its Armed Forces, political circumstances are changing rapidly and dictate changes in the disposition of leading cadres. In this situation, as recent events show, people who have their own principled positions on questions of vital importance for the preservation of state unity and national self-awareness are becoming undesirable.

"In all my activity as chief of the General Staff, I have taken every possible measure to ensure that the constantly changing political situation is reflected in the fate of the Armed Forces and does not cause them to disintegrate spontaneously with disastrous consequences. My views on questions of preserving the Armed Forces, on their thorough reform, and on servicemen's social protection are well known. They have been expressed many times in the mass media. I remain committed to them to this day.

"I firmly declare that I submitted no resignation requests and I reject the speculation, advantageous to some people, about my state of health. As a USSR People's Deputy I am bewildered by the attitude of the Supreme Soviet and the State Council of the USSR toward the fact of the release of the chief of the General Staff from his post."

It emerges from this statement that the general himself does not know why he was dismissed.

After reading the statement we contacted Gen. Lobov.

[Chernyak] Vladimir Nikolayevich, do you think that your dismissal was a breach of the existing procedure?

[Lobov] Yes. In the first place, I was appointed to the post of first deputy defense minister and chief of the General Staff by the USSR State Council but was dismissed by the USSR president personally. In the second place, I am a USSR People's Deputy. There is a statute that no one has the right to remove or transfer a people's deputy without his consent and the knowledge of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

[Chernyak] What are you doing now?

[Lobov] At the moment I am on vacation. But, again according to the rumors, they want to pension me off. Yesterday I met with Gorbachev and asked him about my future.

[Chernyak] And what is it? What answer did you get?

[Lobov] A vague answer: Take a break, then come back and we will sort something out. [Lobov ends]

That is how matters great and small are decided in our country. The president himself breaks the rules even though he also talks about a rule-of-law state and the supremacy of the law.

Lobov Situation Examined

PM1212153991 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 10 Dec 91 p 2

[Report by A. Krayniy: "A Clash of the Titans? There Is a New Master in the Chief of the General Staff's Office"]

[Text] It was announced in Moscow on 7 December that a new USSR Armed Forces chief of General Staff has been appointed in place of Army General Vladimir Lobov: He is Colonel General Viktor Samsonov, who only last Friday was the former commander of forces in Leningrad (St. Petersburg) Military District. It is a curious coincidence that General Lobov also commanded that district at one time.

Vladimir Lobov held the seat previously belonging to Army General Mikhail Moiseyev for a period of just three and a half months—not long, to put it mildly. But perestroyka in everything, including the wording deployed when one or other unfortunate person is sent for "a well-earned rest," means it is impossible to fathom just what happened.

Western commentators say that Lobov was by no means considered a reformer, and it is quite possible that the defense minister is now trying to rid himself of anybody linked with the old-style Soviet military cadre.

There is also another version: Lobov did not utter a word during the August putsch, whereas Samsonov openly opposed Marshal Yazov's decisions.

However, it seems to me that most realistic of all is the theory that the reason for Lobov's retirement was a lack of personal rapport with the defense minister.

It was Gen. Lobov who originally put forward the idea that the defense minister should be a civilian, because in fact it is the chief of the General Staff who controls the troops.

Army General Lobov's Opinion.

"Clearly, my departure from the post of chief of the General Staff has prompted many rumors and much conjecture. So I would like to comment myself on my release from my post. It was as unexpected for me as my initial appointment to the post.

"I do not know the reason for this decision. I left for England on business 1 December and returned late in the evening 6 December. The next morning, 7 December, I dropped in on the defense minister and he informed me that it was impossible for us to continue working together. It turns out that my successor had been anticipating my return and his accession to this post for two days before this.

"The only rebuke on the minister's part was that recently I had talked a great deal to the media on the question of military reform. And my opinions had begun to diverge from those of Marshal of Aviation Ye. Shaposhnikov. Personally, I see nothing wrong in that: After all, the more opinion and discussion there are, the better it will be for our work and the more democratically the process of military reform will progress. Although in principle I did support the minister's viewpoint.

"My position as a professional military person remains as before: I am an advocate of profound reform, and I am in favor of making the Armed Forces economically less burdensome for the country and the social position of officers and their families more secure."

New Chief of Army General Staff Profiled

PM1112120591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 10 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Article by N. Burbyga: "What Brought About Changes in General Staff?"]

[Text] The report carried by news agencies was sensational: By USSR presidential decree 56-year old Army General Vladimir Lobov, USSR first deputy defense minister and chief of the USSR Armed Forces General Staff, had been relieved of his post. Colonel General Viktor Samsonov had been appointed to replace him.

What is the reason for this rapid reshuffle in such a crucial military post? After all, as you know, Army General V. Lobov became chief of the General Staff right after the putsch, replacing the discredited Army General M. Moiseyev.

Military experts believe that his idea of the ways to reform the Armed Forces does not coincide with the direction that has now won the support of the State Council and the country's leadership. When asked by IZVESTIYA's correspondent what brought about this change of leadership, the USSR Defense Ministry Information Directorate said that this was in the "interests of speeding up Army reform..."

Who is Viktor Samsonov? He also won renown during those days in August when he refused to carry out the orders of the State Committee for the State of Emergency and did not bring soldiers and combat hardware onto the streets of Leningrad.

General Samsonov was born in 1941 in Saratov Oblast. In 1964 he graduated from the Far East Higher Combined Arms Command School.

He began his military service as commander of a naval infantry platoon within the Pacific Fleet's separate marine infantry regiment. He was a company commander within the same regiment. In 1972, after graduating from the M.V. Frunze Military Academy, he was appointed chief of staff of a motorized rifle regiment and was then regiment commander and division chief of staff.

In 1981, after graduating from the USSR Armed Forces General Staff Military Academy he was appointed commander of a Transcaucasus Military District motorized rifle division. He was subsequently an army chief of staff, army commander, and chief of staff of the Transcaucasus Military District. In 1990 he was appointed commander of Leningrad Military District.

He is married and has two children.

Ministry Confirms Chernavin Still in Command

LD1212135991 Moscow TASS in English 1320 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Danilin]

[Text] Moscow December 12 TASS—Vladimir Chernavin remains the commander-in-chief of the Soviet Navy, TASS was told today at the press centre of the Soviet Defense Ministry, which denied Moscow media allegations that Chernavin had been removed.

'Difficult Situation' Affects Planned Maneuvers

Tactical Exercises Cut

LD1212144191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1355 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Sergey Ostanin]

[Text] Moscow, 12 Dec (TASS)—The Ground Forces have considerably reduced the staging of various tactical exercises. This measure has been forced upon units and formations of the Ground Forces because of the difficult situation in the country, a TASS correspondent was told today by Col Gen Eduard Vorobyev, deputy commander in chief of Ground Forces.

Ministries of Defense and National Guards are being set up in the former Union republics and the property and equipment of the USSR Armed Forces are being proclaimed republican property. In these conditions any movement of military equipment or troops excites public opinion. This is interpreted in a number of locations as a show of strength and is being used as a pretext for whipping up nationalist, anti-Army attitudes.

Among other reasons for the temporary cut in tactical exercises are the withdrawal of units and subunits of the Soviet Army from the Groups of Forces, the famous events of August, a lack of necessary funds in the USSR Defense Ministry budget, and a manpower shortage in units and formations.

Forces Fail Combat Training

LD1312105491 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 2211 GMT 10 Dec 91

[From the "Military News" section]

[Text] Moscow military command forces fail combat training plan for 1992. Addressing a session of the Military Council of the Moscow Military Command, Lieutenant General Leonid Zolotov cited the August putsch, followed by banning party political activities in and depolitisation of the Army, as well as the use of a large number of servicemen for housing construction and bringing in the vegetable harvest, among the main causes of this situation.

Naval Exercises Still Forecast

LD1312105691 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 2211 GMT 10 Dec 91

[From the "Military News" section]

[Text] Soviet naval exercises in northwestern Baltic Sea are planned for July-August 1992. Baltic Fleet units shall take part in the exercises. Vice Admiral Yuriy Belov, the commander of Tallinn naval base, notified the Department of Security and Frontier Defence of the state office of Estonian Republic about it.

'Time to Acknowledge' Military Intelligence

PM1312094791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 10 Dec 91 Union Edition p 4

[Report by V. Mikheyev: "What Are Our Ships in the Pacific Doing? The Allegedly Nonexistent Main Intelligence Directorate Replies"]

[Text] What does Soviet military intelligence do? The question is intriguing, first of all because you won't find a legislative document confirming its existence in a single public library. Formally, it does not exist. But everyone knows that it does.

Interest in the topic was fueled by a news story which appeared in THE SAN DIEGO UNION and was carried round the world by AP: "Soviet spy ships have stopped collecting intelligence data off the coast of California and have now focused their efforts on obtaining economic information, which they fish for in the vicinity of the Hawaiian Islands."

For what purpose? the reader will wonder. "It may be useful for the recovery of the ailing Soviet economy," is the answer, supported by reference to the authority of Desmond Boll, professor of the National University of Australia. This Sovietologist, recalling that a significant proportion of trans-Pacific exchanges of financial information passes through Hawaii, claims: "Almost six years ago the Soviet Union began reorienting its intelligence operations, since the thaw in relations with the United States reduced the need for military-strategic reporting and began to place the emphasis on commercial information." According to formal logic this is irreproachable. Almost.

IZVESTIYA's editorial office has received an explanation in response to the question it sent to the competent organs (by which we mean the USSR Armed Forces General Staff Main Intelligence Directorate). But the answer came from another source—the USSR Ministry of Defense Information Directorate. We will reveal later why the addressee changed, but first let us quote the official answer.

To begin with, the expository preamble says that "Soviet intelligence ships engage in systematic combat training work to support the everyday activity of the Soviet Navy, primarily in ocean and maritime regions adjoining our country's borders. This fully applies to ships and vessels of the Red Banner Pacific Fleet."

It goes on to totally deny the main premise of the SAN DIEGO UNION article, that a "redirection of the Soviet intelligence effort from the collection and analysis of military-strategic data toward trade and economic information about the United States and the countries of the Pacific region" is taking place. Let us note the categorical nature of the denial, which employs forceful language: "aimed at the uninformed reader," "on the conscience of the authors of the article," "the fruit of honest error," "a clumsy attempt clearly at odds with the constructive spirit of Soviet-U.S. relations," and an effort to "revive the image of the 'Soviet threat' in updated packaging."

I fear that in the reader's subconscious the prevailing stereotype will begin working: "Jupiter, you are angry, therefore you are not in the right." In other words, such an eloquent denial may cause some to suppose that, obviously, we have something to hide and to allude to the claim that "the plane headed in the direction of the sea" [apparent reference to official explanations regarding downing of Korean airliner]. For the sake of objectivity, let us try to examine three possible versions.

Version One. The value of commercial secrets indicating the movement of goods and capital has grown considerably, which is forcing military intelligence, with its arsenal of technically sophisticated systems, to become involved. How expedient is this in our world bristling with nuclear warheads and hotheaded Saddam Husayns? State interests require knowledge of neighbors' combat capabilities and intentions. This is the direct function of military intelligence; everything else, in the current expression, is a case of "not in our department."

Version Two. We take everything which falls into the net, be it fluctuations in exchange rates, or orders for the delivery of New Zealand lamb, confirmation of the shipment of another consignment of "Nissan" cars to Peru, the prices for Indonesian rubber, and so forth. We translate—decipher if necessary—and file. We classify. Only how will the interception of these telephone conversations and telex and fax communications that fill the free airwaves help our "ailing economy"?

Version Three. The Americans have implemented the tried and trusted method known as the "bandwagon" [forgon s orkestrom]. The reader is informed: Not just the United States, but all other countries conduct intelligence operations in national economic interests. It is well known that the CIA recently opened a department in San Diego aimed exclusively at processing information received from cross-questioning businessmen returning from abroad, in order to "keep the penetration of Japanese capital into the Pacific region under control."

But all the same, what does Soviet military intelligence do? Nowhere, not in a single legislative act available to the ordinary citizen will you read about this, just as will not come across the name of the Main Intelligence Directorate. The all-important legal fundamentals defining both the interests of national security themselves and the tasks of specific departments are missing.

By way of comparison: In the United States, the so-called intelligence community includes a large number of full members—the CIA, to some degree the FBI, the Pentagon Intelligence Agency, the Army, Navy, and Air Force Intelligence Agencies, the NASA Intelligence Agency, the Department of Energy special department [osobyy otdel], the State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and the National Security Agency. Each knows its place. Why? The demarcation of powers is detailed in roughly 500 normative acts.

Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's. At one time the bounds of glasnost in our country were extended by the bold disclosure of the fact that we too in our country have unemployment and drug addiction. Evidently it is time to acknowledge the obvious fact that we too have military intelligence. And to outline its sphere of duties—only then will it become, in its own interests too, open to parliamentary control and protected from the imposition of functions that do not properly belong to it. As for economic interests, Ye. Primakov, director of the Central Intelligence Service, has said, as cited by AP, that his department "does not rule out the collection of trade and technical information."

Poll Shows Majority Favor Professional Army

PM1012143991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 6 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Report by A. Levinson under the "Poll" rubric: "Republics Need Armies, the Army Needs Reform"]

[Text] What is the Army to do, now that it is losing the reason for its existence, its material support, and finally its public prestige? VTSIOM [All-Union Center for the

Study of Public Opinion on Social and Economic Questions] has already reported on several occasions that the option which seems the best and most correct to some people, that of the Army taking the fate of society into its own hands, does not find corresponding support in society. Nor is there any confirmation of the hopes that the worse people feel, the greater their support will be. Why?

It seems that this way of thinking is too simple and does not take account of the fact that feelings of dissatisfaction or fear are not the only things growing in society. Something more substantial than "feelings" is growing—new social forces, new goals and interests. The Army, however—which people who would like to see it used as an instrument for "restoring order" want to preserve intact—is a remnant from a previous era. Its current woes, as many in the Army itself realize, are bound up with the very fact that it has remained the way it always was. It has stayed put, but the totalitarian institutions and structures which established and supported it because they exploited it for their own ends, have left or are in the process of leaving the stage. (Their crisis, incidentally, is also made out to be the crisis of society).

The Army, which wants to survive and play an important role in the life of a changing society, must first of all undergo radical change itself. As VTsIOM has already reported, the people do need so many soldiers. Some 53 percent of the inhabitants of Russia, 55 percent of people in Ukraine, 48 percent of people in Kazakhstan, and a majority in practically all remaining areas of the former Union where a poll was conducted in October 1991 support a drastic reduction in the Armed Forces.

Several versions of the way ahead are being mapped out. One option is the professionalization of the army. The majority of those polled in all groups and regions, including 67 percent in Russia and Ukraine, and 51 percent in Kazakhstan, agree that it is necessary to renounce general compulsory military service and establish a professional army founded on a voluntary basis. Some 68 percent of skilled workers, 78 percent of engineering and technical personnel, and 83 percent of pupils and students support this proposal. It is very important that this measure gets firm support from those sections of the population that can realistically yield professional servicemen. The majority of career officers and workers in law enforcement organs polled by us were in favor of this, as were three-quarters of young people of "predraft" age and—most important of all—over 80 percent of people in the postdraft age-group (25-29 years old).

Before, when such major difficulties with the draft, the division of the Union, and so on, were not forcing the pace of reform, it was possible to think about unified Armed Forces whose reform and future control would come from a unified center. The reality is different now. Whereas in Russia three-quarters of the adult population support the idea of Army subunits on former Union territory being under unified command and only 6 percent are against the idea, the number of people who favor this measure in the Russian population outside the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic is only 46 percent, with 31 percent against. But only 25 percent of Ukrainians favor a unified command while 51 percent disagree, including both former and future servicemen.

The military and the politicians will have to reckon with this, just as they must reckon with the fact that the majority of the population in all the surveyed areas outside Russia, including the Russian population, supports the position that "each republic should have its own armed forces."

As we can see, simple decisions, including "militarily simple" decisions, are now impossible and pernicious for everybody. But this situation looks like a dead-end only to someone who is looking backward. Society is becoming more complex, and the more complex it gets, the more complex are the problems it can resolve. The problem of the Army is one of these.

Poll Conducted on Reduction in Red Army Forces

OW1212084091 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0733 GMT 12 Dec 91

[From the "Viewpoint" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] According to the "DATA" news agency, a November opinion poll by the National Public Opinion Studies Center among 1,960 people throughout the country showed that 28% believe the Army should be reduced by half.

19% said the Army should be reduced by one third.

15% suggested the reduction by two thirds and even more.

23% are convinced that the current strength of the Army should be preserved.

16% were undecided.

Margin of error—3%.

Cruisers Sold Abroad For Scrap Confirmed

LD1312100291 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 2300 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] An alarming piece of news: A report that caused confusion among the Far Eastern sailors that the cruisers Aleksandr Suvorov and Lazarev [not traced as such in Jane's Fighting Ships] had been sold abroad for scrap, has been confirmed.

A TASS correspondent was told in the Pacific Fleet Administrative Headquarters that the deal was concluded with an Indian firm, and is not subject to appeal.

Why did they have to be sold abroad? It seems that our domestic industry is currently not able to dismantle and utilize the original steel structure of the warships, yet at the same time the money is needed right now. However, the Varyag, a missile cruiser, named after its famous predecessor, will remain at home, and will be dismantled by local specialists. It is pointed out that the two warships will go to be scrapped under their own steam.

Proposals Forwarded by Ministry Commission Viewed

PM1212120791 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 6 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Report by TASS correspondent R. Zadunayskiy under "Direct Line" rubric: "Results of Commission's Work Summarized"]

[Text] The USSR Defense Ministry Commission To Abolish the Military-Political Organs and Create Combat Training Organs and Structures for Work With Personnel has carried out its main tasks, Colonel of the Reserve Vitaliy Kovalevskiy, a member of the commission and a doctor of philosophical sciences, said in an interview with a TASS correspondent. As stipulated by the USSR defense minister's decision, proposals on the formation of structures for work with personnel in the country's Armed Forces were prepared by 1 December 1991. They provide an opportunity for tens of thousands of former military-political worker officers to continue their service in new posts—as assistant commanders for work with personnel, military psychologists and sociologists, information officers, and assistant commanders for legal training.

The commission's working groups elaborated 29 draft documents, Kovalevskiy said. Specifically, there is the directive on the USSR Defense Ministry Committee for Work With Personnel. There are also draft orders on the new Army and Navy structures, social and humanitarian training, the reorganization of military-political schools, and the creation of a USSR Defense Ministry Humanities Academy. In addition, in two and a half months' work the commission gave efficiency reports to 671 workers in the former military-political organs, including 389 generals and admirals. Around 100 appeals have been considered, in most of which favorable decisions have been made.

Panel Set Up To Dismantle Komsomol Structures

PM1212133191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 6 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[Unattributed report: "Ten Months for Dismantling"]

[Text] A commission has been set up to consider questions associated with terminating Komsomol [All-Union Leninist Communist Youth League] organizations' activity in the USSR Armed Forces. The commission's main task is to take measures to eliminate the Komsomol's organizational structures in the Army and Navy and to decide various questions that arose after the Komsomol organization in the USSR Armed Forces ceased to exist.

The commission will operate over the next 10 months. The commission is headed by Lieutenant Colonel A. Reshetnikov, who previously carried out the duties of chairman of the All-Army Council of Armed Forces Komsomol Organizations. The commission is located in the building of the former Komsomol Central Committee. Contact telephone number: 206-81-69.

Impact of Amnesty Law for Deserters Assessed

PM1212162791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 6 Dec 91 Union Edition p 7

[Report by V. Litovkin: "Deserters Believed the Amnesty, But Certainly Not All of Them"]

[Text] The validity of the USSR Law on Amnesty for Servicemen Evading Military Service expired 4 December. This law is known to have been adopted on the initiative of the USSR Presidential Committee for the Affairs of Servicemen and Members of Their Families, the All-Union Council of Servicemen's Parents, and the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers. The Main Military Prosecutor's Office also took part in drawing up the law.

The essence of the law was that all men who, for whatever reason, had absconded from their units and who voluntarily returned to them before 4 December without having committed any more serious crimes, would be exempt from criminal proceedings, and that men convicted of desertion would be released from disciplinary battalions. What have been the results of the amnesty?

IZVESTIYA's correspondent was told at the Defense Ministry Information Directorate that 3,814 out of 6,230 registered deserters returned to their units a few days before the validity of the law expired. However, these were mainly soldiers from general military units. Only a handful have returned to military construction units, where the morale and day-to-day situation is far more difficult and where discipline and compliance with legality is worst of all.

About 300 men turned up voluntarily at the Moscow assembly point for the rehabilitation of deserters during the month-long validity of the Amnesty Law which was adopted 1 November this year. Between 10 and 40 soldiers turned up here every day. As Assembly Point Chief Aleksandr Bachurin told an RIA correspondent, most of them had deserted from the Transcaucasus and Turkestan Military Districts. The main reasons for their absconding from their units were nonregulation relations and interethnic strife. Many of the soldiers who turned up at the assembly point left their units this year, but there are some who have been fugitives from justice for four to five years.

The Military Tribunals Directorate named the following figure for IZVESTIYA: By the end of November, 1,538 men had been released from disciplinary battalions in line with the amnesty, and more than 700 of them were immediately transferred into the reserves.

The Main Military Prosecutor's Office said that even in the past they used not to initiate criminal proceedings against servicemen who left their units as a result of humiliations, taunts, and physical abuse if these were regular occurrences. Such servicemen were always exempt from liability since they found themselves, as lawyers would say, "in a condition of extreme necessity" and simply could not defend themselves by any other means.

Nor did military prosecutors use to take measures against young men from sovereign republics who, having heeded appeals from their local organs of power, left their units and, on returning home, joined the ranks of the national guard or territorial defense detachments that had been established there.

Summing up the effect of the Amnesty Law for deserters, the main thing one can say is that it is undoubtedly a humane and fair thing to do, but it does not have the power to resolve all the problems of discipline and legality in the Soviet Army, and it cannot protect the soldier from nonregulation relations and interethnic strife. Major and effective reforms, which have long been overdue, are called for.

Here are the latest figures for us to ponder: Today only 23 percent of those who should be joining the ranks this fall and winter have turned up at draft points. In Moscow the figure is 12 percent, in St. Petersburg 9 percent, in Chechnya 43 percent, in Tajikistan 33 percent, in Uzbekistan 21 percent, and in North Ossetia 13.5 percent. In Dagestan the figure is 13.5 percent as well...

Baltic Affairs

Armed Forces Representatives Invited to Seminar

PM1312103091 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Dec 91 First Edition p 3

[TASS report from "In the States of the Former Union" column: "Military Men Invited"]

[Text] [no dateline as published] The security of the Baltic states will be the subject of discussion at a North Atlantic Assembly seminar to be held in Vilnius 16-19 December this year.

Audrius Azubalis, the Lithuanian parliament's press spokesman, announced at a briefing here that representatives of Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United States, the Baltic countries, NATO, and other states and international organizations will take part in the event.

It is reported that representatives of the USSR Armed Forces stationed on the territory of the Lithuanian Republic are invited to the seminar.

Troops To Withdraw From Baltics 'After 1994'

PM1212154991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 11 Dec 91 First Edition p 5

[USSR Defense Ministry Press Center reply to reader's letter under the "From Competent Sources" rubric: "Group Instead of District"]

[Text] "The Baltic Military District has been renamed the Northwest Group of Forces, which is now on the territory of independent states. What status will servicemen of the new group of forces have? Is it proposed to withdraw it? A. Vasilyev, Kaunas."

The status of servicemen of the Northwest Group of Forces will be decided in the course of talks with the governments of the Baltic states. The timing of the talks has not yet been established. As regards the withdrawal of this group of forces, it can be carried out no earlier than the end of the Soviet troop withdrawal from Germany, in other words after 1994.

This reply was obtained from the USSR Defense Ministry Press Center.

Estonia

Note to Soviet Ministry on Minorities Sent

LD0712205791 Moscow TASS in English 1324 GMT 7 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Kharchenko]

[Text] Tallinn December 7 TASS—In his television speech on December 3, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev accused the Baltic states of violating the rights of ethnic minorities. In view of this, the Estonian Foreign Ministry sent a note to the Soviet Ministry for External Relations, the local mass media reports today.

The note describes this statement as ungrounded and says the Estonian Foreign Ministry expects clarifications.

"President Gorbachev said Russians, Ukrainians and representatives of other minority nations living in the Baltic states are requesting protection from the Soviet Union. He did not reject outright the possibility of 'protection', which can be regarded as a threat to the national security of the Estonian Republic and as a move to put pressure on talks between the Estonian Republic and the Soviet Union, which have begun recently," the note says.

The note evaluates the stay of Soviet troops in Estonia and other Baltic countries and the possibility of their going out of control as a serious danger for the Baltic Sea region and the entire Europe.

Bank Signs Agreement With USSR State Bank

LD0612041491 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1300 GMT 5 Dec 91

[Text] USSR State Bank Chairman Viktor Geraschenko and Estonian Bank Chairman Siim Kallas yesterday signed a banking agreement according to which the Estonian republican bank of the USSR State Bank will be included in the composition of the Estonian Bank beginning on 1 January 1992.

ETA notes that the Estonian Bank information service reports that Siim Kallas said the agreement is favorable in every way. An agreement was also reached that there must be no more serious cash difficulties.

Geraschenko believes the situation may improve in 1992, while Kallas is uncertain of this. The head of the USSR State Bank and the entire bank take a professional attitude to this matter. They consider Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania equal partners in talks.

Commercial Banks Forced To Sell Hard Currency

OW1312014891 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1413 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The deputy chairman of the Estonian commercial bank "Hansa Pank" Rain Lohmus has told BF [BALTFAX] that commercial banks in the republic will be forced to start selling hard currency to individuals and organizations, because the shortages of cash in are critical [passage as received]. However, he revealed no exact dates.

He also said that the Bank of Estonia's decision to raise by 40% on December 11 the prices of currency to a total of 94.12 rubles for $1. [sentence as received] The price of the dollar in the black market is approximately the same. Lohmus believes that if the Bank of Estonia goes ahead with this policy, it is very likely that the black market of hard currency will disappear within weeks.

U.S. Official Warns Not To Delay Reforms

OW1312012991 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2008 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] U.S. Deputy Finance Secretary John Robeson said at a press-conference in Tallinn that the key to the success of Estonia's economic reform "is a liberal foreign investment law, open trade and compliance with IMF recommendations."

Procrastination on economic reforms is fraught wth very high expenditures, said Mr Robeson.

Visa Required for Travel Between Baltics, Russia

OW1312005891 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2008 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "Agreements have been signed between Latvia, Lithuania and Russia under which one does not require a visa to travel between these republics, but Estonia's entry regime requires a visa," said Oleg Popovich, official representative of Russia in Estonia, in an interview with BF [BALTFAX].

Mr. Popovich reminded that beginning on January 15, Estonia will demand that any entrant into the republic from the east or south have a visa. The international practice has it that Russia must introduce visa control too, but it cannot meet the deadline, said Mr. Popovich. Howewer, land for Russian border patrol stations has already been allocated.

But the Russian official expressed the opinion that the introduction of a visa regime by Estonia is a temporary step. "We know full well that Estonia has [its] own reasons to introduce a visa regime, but one can hope that it will be abolished after some time," said Mr. Popovich

Latvia

Gorbunovs Congratulates Commonwealth Leaders

LD1212221391 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 0900 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] Anatolijs Gorbunovs, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Latvia, 11 December sent a telegram of congratulations to the leaders of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Russian President Boris Yeltsin, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, and Stanislav Shushkevich, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus.

The greeting says: Your choice will undoubtedly positively affect the process taking place in international relations. Anatolijs Gorbunovs expressed hope for possible collaboration in the future and for the opportunity to enter into talks on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Latvia.

Godmanis Speaks on Resolution on Food Prices

LD1012160791 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1830 GMT 09 Dec 91

['Relay' of television speech by Ivars Godmanis, chairman of the Latvian Council of Ministers; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Godmanis] Good evening, highly respected people of Latvia! I am authorized to announce to you Resolution No. 350 of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia, which was adopted in Riga on 9 December:

Resolution on Prices of Food Products: To promote the transfer of agriculture to market conditions, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia has resolved:

1. To decree that beginning 10 December 1991, all registered entrepreneurs on the territory of the Republic of Latvia are free to buy grain, sugar-beet, cattle products and [word indistinct] products produced on the territory of Latvia for prices that are not lower than the purchase prices laid down for purchase by the state. By these prices we understand prices that are functioning at present. If the producer of the above products has not sold them at free, that is, agreed prices, the state guarantees to buy them at purchase prices laid down by the state.

2. All food and other agricultural products in the Republic of Latvia are to be sold beginning 10 December at free prices. This includes alcohol and tobacco.

3. To declare invalid the previously concluded agreements concerned with the purchases and supplies of agricultural products, as well as confirming (?that part of the [word indistinct] technical resources) as (?existing) for the period after 10 December, 1991. I stress: after 10 December.

4. The state will purchase agricultural production for the fulfillment of intergovernmental agreements, for the state reserves of food products, and for the supply of the republic's closed institutions. The volume of purchases will be according to the ministry's proposals and [word indistinct] the Ministry of Agriculture. The [word indistinct] of the republic's closed institutions is confirmed by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia. Thereby the government takes on the responsibility for the closed and (?mentioned) institutions, but that does not mean that two prices will figure in Latvia; there will be only one, free-market price.

5. To form a government commission for the assessment of the [word indistinct] of the situation of prices of foodstuffs. The leadership of this commission will be entrusted to me, the chairman of the Council of Ministers. The deputies will be the minister of economic reform, Mr. Kalnins, and the minister of agriculture, Mr. Gegers.

6. Beginning 10 December, for a period to be determined by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia, the export licensing of food products will come under the supervision of the government commission mentioned in Point 5 of this resolution. This means that those licenses that were issued earlier, and which are issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, other ministries, and including local authorities will not be valid without acceptance by this committee after 10 December. It is decreed that beginning 10 December licenses accepted by the Government Commission mentioned in Point 5 of this Resolution for the exporting of food products are valid. Only these licenses will be recognized by Latvian Customs. The stipulations for the licensing of food product exporters apply to joint enterprises and their subsidiaries.

7. To decree that the Executive Committee of the Board of the Council of People's Deputies is responsible for the marketing of food products on its territory. [Words indistinct] takes into its hands this entire marketing process. Secondly it confirms, if necessary, limitations (?on pricing) of the products (?of enterprisies under its administration).

8. To the Ministries of Agriculture, Finance and Internal Affairs to fix the volume of meat and milk products for state [word indistinct] enterprises and state cold stores according to the situation on 10 December. To sell this production from the specified enterprises in a way determined by the Council of Minister of the republic of Latvia (?on the example of a wholesale pricing up to) five percent. Here I refer to the situation on 9 December at the end of the working day.

9. To decree for the processors of milk and meat to state enterprises at the maximum acceptable level of profitability, that is approximately 15 percent (?above) outlay. The profits from state processing enterprises that is obtained above the decreed 15 percent level of profitability after the payment of tax are to be given to agricultural producers in proportion to the volume of their production sold.

10. To decree the production of milk and milk products in the Republic of Latvia to the maximum market (?pricing) level up to 20 percent, for meat and meat products up to 15 percent, bread and processed bread up to 25 percent; for other food products in accordance with the supplement to this resolution which which I will read. Those so-called [word indistinct] in the shops. Market (?pricing) of all kinds of foodstuffs also includes a wholesale (?mark-up of) up to (?25 percent).

11. The Ministry of Agriculture, together with the Ministry of Finance, once every half year, will assess the level of outlay, income, and the state-decreed purchase prices for producers of agricultural products and processing enterprises.

12. To charge the Ministry of Agriculture and of Finance, and the Ministry of (?Trade) together with the Ministry of Economic Reform to prepare, within a week, and submit to the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia, proposals for the making of amendments to the normative acts that are in force and are in contradiction to this resolution. Supplement to the Resolution of 9 December of the Council of Ministers, on the separate price [word indistinct] market and wholesale (?pricing). Market (?pricing) up to 15 percent, including wholesale (?mark-up of) up to five percent, is stipulated for (?dairy and fat) foodstuffs: margarine, butter, cheese, eggs, meat, canned milk, ice-cream, vegetable oils. Up to 25 percent (?mark-up) on market prices is decreed, including a five-percent wholesale (?mark-up), on flour, groats, rice, leguminous (?grains), bran, macaroni, sugar and confectionery, as well as other food products bought from producers in the Republic of Latvia. Decree No. 1, which is adopted by the Government Commission for the Operative Assessment of the Situation in Food Marketing: On the basis of Resolution No. 350 of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia, of 9 December, on the prices of food products, it is decreed that on 10 December all food and other agricultural products in the Republic of Latvia are for sale at free prices. To ensure that all entrepreneurs of the Republic of Latvia, irrespective of the administration and ownership of these enterprises, [words indistinct]:

1. Conduct stock-taking of production according to the situation at the end of the working day on 9 December 1991.

2. Marketing and (?joint-stock) enterprises, on 10 December 1991, to conduct sales of remainders of food stocks with the (?mark-up) stipulated in the aforementioned resolution, but having received food products at free prices, the price of the remainder to be marked up to the free minimum price level as appropriate. Funds acquired as the result of (?trading) are to be circulated as additional funds which are necessary for the purchase of production.

3. (?Publicly owned) enterprises are (?to mark up) calculating according to free retail prices on the basis of those stipulated for retail by the Department of Prices at the Ministry of Economics on 12 March 1991. In case of necessity, the (?mark-up) is to be limited for publicly (?owned) enterprises, confirmed by the Executive Committee of the Board of the Council of People's Deputies. The arrangements for (?marking up) alcoholic drink prices are retained.

Highly respected people of Latvia! Undoubtedly this is one of the most responsible and most difficult resolutions to be adopted by the Government of Latvia in the economic sense since 4 May [1990, declaration of independence]. The government is conscious of all the responsibility it is taking on at this most difficult of times, when we find ourselves in a deep energy crisis, when we find ourselves in a situation where in practice we can no longer maintain fixed prices for food products, (?despite) the free prices of petrol, there will be no wholesale [word indistinct]. Likewise, I want to say that such steps have been taken in Estonia, partly in Lithuania, and after our recent visit to Moscow they were immediately taken in Russia.

Thereby what was found in the government program is being carried out with corrections. What we promised to do on 1 January is being done sooner, especially the [word indistinct] which were fixed in our program have unfortunately come to pass. On the other hand I want to say that this step is a consistent step in the direction of this government's policy, which is directed at the freeing of prices, to privatization, privatization not with rubles but with convertible currency, (?though) payment in lats has been postponed, directed at the (?introduction of the lat), directed at the withdrawal of foreign troops, directed at our transition to this difficult period; and the first months will be especially difficult, gradually, but definitely, getting out of this economic crisis in which we find ourselves. Only if we are united in our persistence will we pull through. Thank you for your attention.

Leaders Not To Attend USSR Supreme Soviet

LD1212163391 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1830 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Text] The leaders of the Republic of Latvia, Anatolijs Gorbunovs, Dainis Ivans, and other USSR People's deputies elected on the territory of Latvia, have received an invitation to be present on 12 December at a joint session in the chamber of the former USSR Supreme Soviet, where, the message says, extremely important questions will be discussed. The message is signed by the initiative group for convening an extraordinary congress. Several deputies have stated their views on this matter. They will not be travelling to Moscow because they have already given up their mandates as USSR people's deputies.

Milk, Meat Facilities Under Armed Guard

OW1312011691 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1703 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Latvian Premier Ivars Godmanis went on the radio December 12 to say that the Republican Operational Committee for the Liberalization of Prices decided to place milk bottling and meat packing facilities under armed guard.

Also, Latvian trains will not any longer cross the republican border. The customs service was instructed to confiscate all foodstuffs being smuggled out of the republic. A smuggler will be subject to an up to R[ruble]5000 fine.

The committee decided that Latvia should not produce expensive bread. On December 13 a loaf of bread will cost R3.5, not R4.5 as today.

The price of butter will be R60 per kilo (it costs R100 per kilo on the free market and is not available in state owned shops).

Milk price will remain stable until December 23. Today 1 liter of milk costs around R4.

OMON Commander Arrested With Russia's Help

OW1112141191 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1138 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The head of Latvia's parliament Anatolijs Gorbunovs has told Russia's Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy that Sergey Parfenov, ex-deputy commander of the OMON [special purpose militia detachment] spetsnaz unit in Riga, was arrested on Russian territory by the Latvian Procurator's Office on the latter's agreement with, and with direct assistance from, the RSFSR Procurator's Office [sentence as received]. The agreement was concluded on May 22 1991. A permanent resident of Latvia, Sergey Parfenov is accused of committing crimes on the territory of the Latvian republic.

This information was offered to Mr Rutskoy in reponse to his demand that the OMON commander be freed.

Mr Gorbunovs agrees with Mr Rutskoy that it is time Latvia and Russia concluded an agreemet on mutual assistance in the legal sphere. A draft agreement of this kind has already been prepared by Latvian experts.

Defense Minister Denies Threat of Coup

OW1312012791 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2008 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Latvian Defense Minister Talavs Jundzis said in the republican parliament on December 12 that, according to the information he had, most Soviet troops did not plan to take part in any coup attempts. However, he said that Major-General Mironov, commander of the North-Western Army Group, "did not rule out the possibility of hostilities" on the territory of the Baltics in the near future.

General Mironov told BF [BALTFAX] that the rumours concerning an approaching coup in the republic are "laughable". "The army is preparing to leave the Baltics, and any coup, much less hostilities, is out of the question," said General Mironov.

The Latvian defense minister described the progress made so far on the development of a republican defense force. He said that around 1000 Latvian young people were taking military training or doing border guard duty. ⅔ of the republican regions have finished the development of militia structures that now have a combined strength of 10,000. The troops have more—but still not enough—weapons as compared with August 1991.

"We are not creating a classic army, the main priority is border protection," said Mr Jundzis.

Lithuania

Vagnorius Congratulates Yeltsin on Commonwealth

LD1212232991 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 2000 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius has sent a telegram to Russian President Boris Yeltsin. It says: We congratulate you, Mr. President, on the creation of an independent commonwealth of democratic independent states. We believe that the creation of such a commonwealth will serve to maintain stability in the region, and will help in the more resolute reconstruction of the economy and social life of the republics.

We hope that good and mutually advantageous relations will develop between Lithuania and Russia and the Commonwealth of the Independent States.

Vagnorius Comments on Impact of Commonwealth

LD1312125491

[Editorial Report] Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian at 1300 GMT on 12 December broadcast an interview with Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius on the impact of the commonwealth agreement on Lithuania.

Vagnorius stated: "I think it does affect us. This will serve to make our relations with these states more efficient and our treaties better coordinated. The Lithuanian side, on its part has long been cooperating with the Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia, but we have observed that sometimes Russia's stand on some matters differs from the stances of Ukraine or Belarus. I think this cooperation will help them to speed the relations of both nations with others."

Asked if Lithuania would receive any of the 1 billion European currency units of aid promised by the EEC to the former republics of the USSR, Vagnorius replied: "I think that it will be distributed, but separately. At present talks are under way between our representatives and Brussels. Talks are also being held with German representatives and with some firms in Hungary about receiving economic, technical, and humanitarian aid."

Vagnorius then discussed the need for discipline in society and government, particularly in light of economic difficulties. He also commented on his liking for rock music and clothes.

Country 'Does Not Plan To Join' Commonwealth

OW1212173391 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1703 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Lithuania does not plan to join the commonwealth of independent states but supports it and intends to maintain the closest of ties with the entity, both the commonwealth itself and with each of the consitutent republics," said Egidjus Bickauskas, Lithuania's charge d'affaires in Moscow, in an interview with BF. [BALTFAX]

According to Mr. Bickauskas, "Lithuania has been fighting for too long to gain independence and has paid too high a price to allow itself to lose independence at once."

Shevardnadze Replaced as Head of Delegation

OW1312122591 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1130 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ambassador Viktor Smolin has been appointed to lead the Soviet delegation for talks with Lithuania.

Moscow notified Lithuania's parliament about this, said Andrius Azubalis, leader of the parliament's center for information and analysis, at a briefing in Vilnius on Friday [13 December].

V. Smolin replaces in this post Eduard Shevardnadze, USSR minister for external relations.

BF [BALTFAX] has learned that, as a member of the Soviet delegation for talks with Lithuania, V. Smolin was responsible for drafting the main documents for E. Shevardnadze.

R8 Million in Food Aid Dispatched to Moscow

LD1212211591 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 2000 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] The Government of the Republic of Lithuania has allotted and speedily dispatched to Moscow a gratuitous aid in the form of food products to the value of 8 millions rubles.

Five From 'Armed Underground' Elements Held

OW1112051891 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1630 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The General Prosecutor's office of the Lithuanian Republic is holding 5 people accused of participating in the creation and activities of an armed underground in Lithuania, said Juozas Gaudutis, head prosecutor in the criminal investigation department of the Lithuanian General Prosecutor's office.

According to Gaudutis, these people "are strongly susceptible to Marxist-Leninist ideology, have antidemocratic and anti-Lithuanian tempers and the goals of terror and regaining by force the positions they have lost in Lithuania."

Gaudutis has told "BALTFAX" that the underground unites people who took active part in the January 1991 events in Vilnius. Their activities, according to him, are controlled by the leaders of the former Lithuanian Communist Party, which is presently in hiding on the territory of the former USSR. Gaudutis said that investigations are presently under way to discover the underground's structure and "degree of diffusion." The prosecutor has announced the danger that "the underground could complete terrorist actions against the people or property of Lithuania."

At the same time he is skeptical about the possibility that the terrorists could succeed in a state revolution in the republic, without the support of a foreign army. "We control their activity by certain measures," stated Gaudutis.

According to the prosecutor, the existence of the underground is connected to the tragedy at the customs post of Medininka on July 31, 1991, when seven Lithuanian customs officials and policemen were killed by unknown assailants. Regarding investigation of this crime, Gaudutis said that the "general prosecutor's office already has the end of the thread to figure out this crime."

Supreme Soviet

Leaders Brief Deputies on Minsk Accord

PM1212162691 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Robert Minasov report under general heading "Commonwealth of Independent States: The Beginning" entilted "A Necessary Measure"]

[Text] A 90-minute meeting took place between leaders of the Russian Government and Supreme Soviet and USSR people's deputies representing Russia in the Union parliament. The subject of the dialogue was clarification of the Russian leadership's position at the talks with Belarus and Ukraine in Belovezhskaya Pushcha 7-8 December and the agreement concluded there on the creation of a Commonwealth of Independent States.

The meeting was attended by G. Burbulis, first vice premier of the Russian Government; S. Filatov, first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet; Yu. Voronin, deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet; S. Shakhray, state counselor for legal questions; and N. Ryabov, chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Soviet of the Republic.

The meeting was opened by S. Filatov. He stated that the signing of the agreement by Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine was a necessary, overdue measure, since the situation in the country and society is virtually unmanageable and the preparations for concluding a Union treaty were proceeding without inspiration or visible progress. He announced that ratification of the agreement was due to take place in the Supreme Soviets of Ukraine and Belarus 10 December, while the Russian parliament will examine the document at a joint plenary session 12 December.

As for the chances of ratification of the agreement in the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, Filatov noted that they are quite high, although there are some groups of deputies there who are seeking through ill-considered actions to torpedo the ratification and also, as in the Union parliament, are collecting signatures to convene an extraordinary Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies.

G. Burbulis gave those present a detailed account of the preparations for the meeting of the three states' leaders and the signing of the agreement.

Boris Yeltsin, Burbulis reported, informed the USSR president of the forthcoming talks in Minsk before he went. Therefore there can be no grounds for suspecting any kind of private moves.

We tried to rectify the basic articles of the draft Union treaty, the first vice premier noted. And we sought to remove the hypocritical formula about a confederative state. All the speculations on the "Slav theme" which some of the mass media are dwelling on, have no foundation whatever.

I was rather surprised, Burbulis went on, by the USSR president's appeal, in his statement, for the convocation of an extraordinary Congress of USSR People's Deputies and a referendum. The Congress, which has in effect ceased to exist, does not reflect the interests of many voters, who are the ones who suffer most as a result of our unbearable life.

Yeltsin Comments on Amendments

LD1212164991 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1036 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Remarks by President Boris Yeltsin at the 12 December Supreme Soviet Session in Moscow—live]

[Text] Esteemed people's deputies: I wish to say something more on this matter [amendments to the agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States]. At the sessions of the supreme soviets of Ukraine and Belarus, no amendments were introduced to the agreement itself, but they decided to add a list of their views as an appendix to the agreement. This was done in order to discuss it once more, together, with the inclusion of such remarks as will be introduced today by the Supreme Soviet when there is a meeting between all those who want to sign this agreement.

Khasbulatov Addresses Deputies

LD1212204291 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1109 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Speech by Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov at the 12 December Supreme Soviet session in Moscow—live]

[Text] Esteemed President of the Russian Federation; esteemed People's Deputies: I take my place at this rostrum in order to call upon our deputies to ratify the Minsk agreement. I do not think I will present any new arguments. The points of view have been set out in a very convincing way here, both those in favor and against. Of course, to be frank, the critics of this agreement do have certain grounds, a certain foundation. Of that there is no doubt. We are all the children of our time. Whether the Union was bad or whether the Union was good—no matter what it was like—it was our Union; therefore, there are some very serious roots, there are some very serious natural links between the Union as a former reality and our opinions that we express in one way or another with regard to that Union. Perhaps there is absolutely nothing here in which one can take pleasure, but the bitter truth amounts to this: This Union has literally started to fall apart before our eyes.

This agreement is a completely natural and sufficient reflection of the only alternative that is possible under present-day historic conditions in order to bring order to the chaotic disintegration of this Union, which is possible if vigorous actions are not taken, belated though they are, in my view. In all the time before we were not given the opportunity to implement this idea. You remember how the president recalled the idea that was born more than a year ago. The prerequisites were there, very serious prerequisites, for its conclusion.

I am therefore in complete solidarity with the thought that has been expressed that it is quite likely and possible that this is the last historic chance giving us the opportunity to preserve some radical basis for our ties. Incidentally, I see nothing wrong in the fact that there is talk about the Slav factor and about border republics. What is wrong if the peoples want to return to their roots and their origins at a very difficult time, a time of trial? We ought not to forget that first there was Kievan Rus and then Russia.

Of course, in no way should there be criticism or accusations about this alliance being directed against anyone. This is an open community. Today we must confirm its open and universal nature for all republics that have declared themselves to be independent.

Esteemed deputies: I would like to remind you of one more thing. This is a very serious choice for our parliament. Remember when our session began, in the first few days, how deputies had certain fears about the role and authority of the Russian parliament falling and how there were many opinions connected with these fears? I think that the calls for rejection and the calls for postponement hit particularly at our authority. We cannot view ourselves as a serious legislative body representing the interests of our voters and our peoples if, at this time of trial, we make the wrong choice.

I ask you, please, do think about this factor. The idea of this commonwealth is so attractive to the people, and even the president spoke about the attitude of the Army leadership. We must just explain things correctly and reject all kinds of free interpretations and arbitrary utterances about this truly very serious and very likely final historic chance for our moving to a new situation without any major collisions or other shocks.

I thank you, and call upon you all to vote and to make the correct decision to ratify the decision we are discussing.

Thank you. [applause]

Kozyrev Answers Questions

LD1212171491 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0850 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Question and answer session between Foreign Minister A. V. Kozyrev and unidentified deputies at the 12 December Supreme Soviet session in Moscow—live]

[Excerpts] [Deputy] My question is really for the defense minister, but since there is not one, I ask the foreign minister to reply. By putting an end to the existence of the USSR, we are automatically releasing our armed forces from their oath, which they undertook as an oath to the USSR. In your view, how should this problem be tackled further? A new oath? To whom? To the community? But it is not a state. To every republic individually? That is hardly a possibility. The armed forces remain unified. [passage omitted]

[Kozyrev] As far as the oath is concerned, I have arrived at a point of a certain historic truth. This truth is contained in what I think I detected in the speech by Boris Nikolayevich: the Army swears its oath to the people. Today the peoples have expressed their will. With all respect, the question of how to reformulate the oath is a purely technical one. We ran across this situation in August when the Army remained on the side of the people and not on the side of an oath taken formally and in the abstract. In general, it is now December, but in 1825, the Russian officer corps also displayed a vision of history that is far better than any outmoded structures. If they had listened to them then, on Senatskaya Square, perhaps the tragedy of 1917 would not have happened. So it seems to me that the question now is one not of technicalities but of the essence. [passage omitted]

[Deputy] [name indistinct] Nizhniy Novgorod, Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic constituency (?56). I would like to return to the question of defense that you have not yet answered. The treaty signed in Brest, it seems to me, has not settled this question: What is the purpose of our troops on the territory of new independent states? That is, how and when will the question of foreign troops be settled? I have in mind Russian troops on the territory of new independent states. Today they have been elevated to the status of occupiers.

Today there is a (?totalitarian) annihilation of Russian soldiers taking place on the territory of newly formed adjacent states. Does this treaty settle the question of withdrawal; that is the third question, the withdrawal of these troops immediately to the borders of the new state.

[Kozyrev] You know, I think that one of the reasons this Commonwealth of Independent States has been formed is to put a final end to the presence of Russian and other soldiers on territories which no longer recognize their being under the flag of the USSR, a USSR that many republics, sovereign states, do not recognize either, as it turns out. The transition to recognition of the actual circumstances that you are speaking of, calling the Soviet Army the Russian one, or ones belonging other republics, perhaps—resolution like this will now be possible on an interstate basis. In his speech, Boris Nikolayevich said that a military-political alliance would be formed. Talks are in progress on this. I am confident that in the near future we will be reporting to you on all these questions. They are fairly complicated and delicate. I do not think we can resolve them here, but at least a clear legal basis is emerging for settling these issues, one that has not existed for some time in the framework of the former USSR.

St Petersburg Mayor Comments

LD1212172991 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Speech by St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak at the 12 December Supreme Soviet session in Moscow—live]

[Text] Esteemed president, esteemed comrade deputies: Our country's economic and political situation today is such that we can no longer allow ourselves to waste time on endless debates about our future. It is precisely for this reason that I call on you to ratify the proposed agreement, but before tackling this issue it is necessary to be completely clear in one's own mind about a whole number of very important problems that are arising in connection with the conclusion of this agreement. I would like to dwell on these problems.

Problem No. 1: A number of deputies have spoken about it here. Because this agreement is allegedly contrary to the RSFSR Constitution and entails a radical change in Russia's state system, it cannot be ratified. I believe that these claims are not based on the USSR Constitution or on the content of the agreement. Indeed, the preamble of the USSR Constitution contains a formula about the determination to create a democratic law-governed state within the renewed Union, but this is only a preamble and the agreement concluded does not at all cancel the possibility of creating a renewed union. Comrade Travkin, whom I respect, pointed this out correctly here. Perhaps it is precisely this agreement that is the new form of the Union toward which we are beginning to move today.

I would like to stress again that the preamble does not forbid the president and the parliament to conclude any other agreements regarding any other forms of cooperation with other republics and states. Therefore, I do not see this as a serious problem for the Supreme Soviet.

Another matter is if, on the basis of a subsequent development of events and of those documents which will be drawn up on the basis of this agreement, it becomes necessary to introduce some changes into the Constitution, then indeed it is necessary to observe the appropriate procedure for introducing changes to the Constitution—and it would be even better if it is replaced as soon as possible by a new constitution which is more in line with political and economic realities.

Question No. 2 is the question of legal succession to the Union, of the founders, of the operation of the Union's law, questions which arise at once in connection with the conclusion of the aforesaid agreement. First I would like to say the following: Both on the basis of the text of the agreement and beyond the bounds of the agreement a multitude of problems can be raised and discussed. Why has this not been mentioned or why has it been worded like this, and does it not mention a different matter in a different way? What is at issue now is precisely this agreement and it is precisely this agreement that is to be ratified. It is especially important to do this in connection with those amendments which, in the view of some, are of an editorial nature and, in the view of others—and I associate myself with the latter—are not at all of an editorial nature, which were introduced, say, in the Ukrainian Parliament.

We must make it totally clear to ourselves: We will ratify the agreement concluded by the presidents. Further, we will entrust—and here one needs to think how to write it into the Supreme Soviet decision—we will entrust either the president and the government or the corresponding body of the Supreme Soviet to carry out the necessary work to coordinate with the Ukraine's Parliament, and in the event of situations arising with the parliaments of other republics, questions arising in connection with the conclusion of the agreement or some other interpretation of this agreement.

This is already a further step toward this Commonwealth, of giving the word commonwealth a real political, legal, and state content. This must be stated because the Ukrainian Parliament cast very serious doubts on two very important provisions of this agreement.

Now the question of succession. Over the past several months there have been many statements on who is the Union's successor. In connection with this agreement, assertions were heard today, too, and attempts were made to allege that this sort of Slavic entity is setting itself against the Turkish-speaking and other areas. I think this is irresponsible talk. Only all the Union republics that formed the Union can be the Union's successor in the strict sense of the word.

That is indeed why all of these questions, common questions, questions of the common debt, and other questions concerning responsibility for the international agreements and obligations of the Union—they equally affect any Union republic which formed a part of this Union. This must be taken as the starting premise when tackling and implementing this process of unification in the future: The common questions must be tackled in the new Commonwealth of Independent States.

That is why I think that this document fails to mention a very important provision, an important provision—and I am concluding—which, in my view, will be of great significance for the future. It seems to me that all the republics of the former Soviet Union should be the founders of the new Commonwealth. They have identical rights to act as founders—all the republics of the former Soviet Union—and this should be enshrined within the agreement itself. It is another matter whether or not they will make use of this correctly, but if they should wish to make use of this, they should join the agreement precisely as founders and not as third countries that joined this agreement.

This aspect is very important from the legal and, perhaps even more so, from the psychological viewpoint, so that confrontation between various formations and republics is averted without fail.

The last thing I would like to mention is the action of Union laws. [Yeltsin interjects at this point to remind the speaker that his time is up.] I am concluding, and I ask you to record in your decision the formula that was put forward because the RSFSR laws and the laws of other former Union republics have loopholes and inconsistencies as far as many questions that have been resolved in the Union laws are concerned. That is why it is necessary to prolong the operation of the Union laws. Thank you for your attention.

Travkin Supports Agreement

LD1212202391 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1045 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Speech by Deputy Nikolay Travkin at the 12 December Supreme Soviet session in Moscow—live]

[Text] To begin with, I would like to clarify the information provided in the press. Neither the Democratic Party of Russia nor myself as a deputy came out against or are coming out against the ratification and the signing of the Minsk agreement. We do, however, think—and I as a people's deputy of Russia and of the Union think—that it should not be just a replacement. The Minsk agreement should be adopted as a supplement to the Union Treaty, which was discussed by the presidents of these republics and which was submitted for examination by the sessions of the Supreme Soviets.

I think that we should say a few words about this. After all, it would be a normal supplement determining our relations with the Ukraine during the period of transition. I am convinced that the Ukraine and the people will come around to this. The economic situation itself will compel them to understand and that they should join the Union.

As Russians, we cannot take upon ourselves the moral responsibility for abolishing this state. Let us append our signatures and let us see. If no one joins this Union, we will say: Well OK, no one wants to; hence, we are compelled to act differently. In other words, let us adopt the documents as a pair and vote for the Union Treaty submitted as a result of the Novo-Ogarevo agreements; subsequently, let us also vote for the ratification of the Minsk agreement. Why? In my view, it would be the expedient thing to do.

Foreign Minister Kozyrev and government representatives spoke here. They all assert that the agreement is a declaration and that, of course it will be necessary, in connection with this agreement, to examine a whole package of various mechanisms to implement it.

A similar package for the Union treaty has 300 pages and took half a year to elaborate. Do we have another six months to embark on that kind of elaboration for this agreement, too? After all, the way things will shape up will be like this: Ukraine will agree to this and that, Belarus will not agree to something or other, and in the meantime we will continue disputes about this package in an ever worsening situation while we fail to begin market reforms. The signing of the Union treaty would make it possible for us to start these market reforms.

Additional agreements are being worked out at present behind the backs of parliamentarians. For instance, yesterday at the news and information agency [ANI], Kravchuk made a statement that an agreement was reached with Russian President Boris Yeltsin to the effect that in January Russia is making 16 billion rubles available to Ukraine for the sake of friendship and coordinated entry into the market. Multiplying this by 12 months we get the figure of 192 billion rubles. Where does Russia get such money? Maybe Kravchuk did not tell the truth? In that case, this must be denied. I think that Boris Nikolayevich will deny that we are buying anyone else's friendship and that we have our own Russian dignity, if you like, to interact as equals. This is the first point.

There was a heartening, encouraging statement by the three republican leaders concerning Moldova, to the effect that there is no need to quarrel with the Dnestr Republic. All ethnic issues can be resolved in a civilized way—something we are unable to resolve in Russia where Tatars or the Northern Caucasus are concerned. As long as there is no powerful center that has a very clear statement on protecting human rights irrespective of nationality, not a single republic will be able to solve this problem on its own. For the sake of this alone, it is necessary already at this stage to sign the Union treaty.

My last point: It is no coincidence that we have failed to start any reforms in Russia. After all, a price free-for-all is not tantamount to transition to a market, but something else. Not a single reform.... [changes thought] To this very day we have failed to resolve the land question. To this very day probably each and every one of you receives the news that there is no mechanism on how to take over this land so that next year we do not end up hungry again. We have not begun any privatization. The only useful thing we did was to set up the Ministry for Industry with a complement of 2,960 people. For three years we have been running away from this, from these monsters. Now we are beginning to restore them inside Russia. We will not begin any reforms as long as we fail to resolve this political question. That is why I call on deputies to think a bit and to ratify both agreements.

Thank you.

Baburin on 'Inactive Center'

LD1212153591 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0949 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Speech by Deputy Baburin at the 12 December Supreme Soviet session in Moscow—live]

[Text] Esteemed president, esteemed chairman, esteemed people's deputies: Today, without a doubt, will be historical—and not only for our country. The nature of the decision we have to make, if you cast aside all provisos and circumlocutions, boils down to one thing: In order to rid ourselves of the inactive center, headed by Gorbachev, let us liquidate our state. No matter who tells us that the decisions have been made—the decisions have been made and the Soviet Union is no more—these decisions were made by politicians. It was strange to hear a Democratic Russia representative who said that Democratic Russia has always supported the union. At the union referendum, it called for a negative answer to preserving the union. Let us call things by their proper names, and if today we decide that yes, we renounce the union, the federative state, no fig leaves will be able to provide a cover for this decision.

I wish to read a very brief statement of the Russian Popular Alliance [Rossiyskiy Obshchenarodnyy Soyuz] on the Brest peace 1991:

Our multinational power, throughout centuries, was held together, above all, by the unity of the three Slavic peoples. A blow has now been struck at this unity. The agreement signed on 8 December 1991 by the leaders of Belarus, the RSFSR, and the Ukraine, playing upon national sentiments and dangerously and hopelessly setting off of the Slavic world against the Turkish-Muslim world, leads to the complete disintegration of the country and to a final break between peoples. Even if this liberal utopia succeeds in creating a state, it will not last forever. Our peoples are wiser than its politicians today. Welcoming the departure from the political arena of the inactive center headed by Mikhail Gorbachev, the Russian Popular Alliance and the Russia group of deputies came out in favor—and will continue to favor a restoration of a unified, federative state which should be underpinned by a strong union between Belarus, Russia, the Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. Will the agreement signed on 8 December facilitate the restoration of such a state?

Esteemed colleagues, the agreement we are discussing here today no longer exists. If you take a look at the amendments adopted during the ratification of this agreement in Kiev, you will see that they renounce the idea of armed forces as a single entity; that they renounce open borders. These amendments, no matter what our esteemed diplomats choose to say, have been adopted by a constitutional majority. The way we differ from both the Belarus and Ukrainian Supreme Soviets is that we are not the highest body of state. We will not be able to change, by a constitutional majority, the basic law of the Russian Federation. This is precisely why I propose that a congress of RSFSR People's Deputies be convened to examine all the necessary changes to the constitution and to tackle this question precisely at the congress.

Apart from that, the reference to the 1922 Treaty, contained in the agreement, is legal hypocrisy. The 1922 Treaty ceased to exist long ago. There exists the 1977 USSR Constitution. Whether we like it or not, what we are doing today represents, indeed, an anticonstitutional action on the level of the Soviet Union. By comparison with December 1991, the August putschists turn into Don Quixote characters, because they acted openly and were guided, perhaps—and I do not have any doubts about it—by the good goals of preserving our state and it is for this sake that they violated the constitution. We are violating the constitution for the sake of destroying this state.

Without any hedging, let us take the responsibility upon ourselves. Apart from that, when we enter into responsibilities, or when we pass responsibility from one to another in this agreement, let us recall that Russia has, to this very day, been unable to protect Russians, not even on its own territory. The government was unable to ensure that Sergey Parfenov return to the territory of Russia and, all in all, the special services of foreign states feel very good on our territory, very good indeed.

[Yeltsin reminds Baburin that his time is up.] I am concluding, thank you. No one has been made responsible for human rights violations in Checheno-Ingushetia and in many other republics. That is why I ask you to take note that this agreement, without putting any serious obligations on anyone, turns the Russian Federation into an economic feeding-trough for other participants.

Volkogonov on 'Wise' Decision

LD1212200591 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1038 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Speech by Deputy Dmitriy Antonovich Volkogonov at the 12 December Supreme Soviet session in Moscow—live]

[Excerpt] Esteemed comrade president, esteemed Presidium, colleagues: Until August of this year, there might have been a chance to preserve the Union, but within the few days during which a change of epochs has taken place, two possibilities have emerged—reanimation of a totalitarian society or a speckled mosaic of the apanage principalities.

I think that in Brest representatives of the three republics found a very wise solution, arriving, in fact, at a historic compromise between these two possibilities, which both would have been unwelcome. This is a historic compromise of destiny-making significance.

I believe that there are several arguments on a much larger scale in support of this document, which we are here to ratify. I am convinced that we will ratify it. [passage omitted]

Burbulis on Union Treaty

PM1312113091 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Aleksandr Linkov report: "Gennadiy Burbulis: To Sign the Union Treaty Would Mean Marking Time Again"]

[Text] The scheduled meeting in the White House between RSFSR people's deputies and the Russian leadership began a good half-hour late.

"We have just come back from a meeting with Union deputies," said a tired Sergey Filatov, first deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet, apologizing for the delay, and he summed up. "The discussion was extremely tough."

Everyone knows about the negative reaction of deputies of the former USSR to the agreement concluded in Minsk by the leaders of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine. An attempt has been launched to convene an extraordinary Congress, so as to wreck by any possible means the process of the formation of a fundamentally new Commonwealth of Independent States. Perhaps the most important thing is to save themselves, their own jobs, and the clarifications provided by representatives of the Russian leadership probably had no effect.

At the same time, speaking at the meeting with RSFSR deputies, Gennadiy Burbulis, first deputy chairman of the government, stressed that to sign the Novo-Ogarevo version of the Union treaty now would mean marking time again, for several more months. The agreement of the three republics offers scope for effective implementation of the reforms that there is so much talk about.

One of the main topics at the meeting was what is the military reaction to all these events? It is the Army that now finds itself in rather an uncertain position. The recent cadre reshuffles among the generals have further exacerbated the situation in the Army, and one can expect the unpredictable from that direction. Gennadiy Burbulis informed those present that President Boris Yeltsin met with Marshal Shaposhnikov and briefed him on the text of the agreement. The marshal assessed the document highly, calling it timely.

The signing of the agreement on the creation of a Commonwealth of Independent States is now a historical fact. Mikhail Gorbachev's attempts to revive the Novo-Ogarevo Union treaty are not very likely to succeed. The report that the Baltic republics and Armenia have shown interest in the Minsk agreement doubtless came as a total surprise to the Union president. The uncertainty of Mikhail Gorbachev's position is further exacerbated by the fact that with his call for a Congress of USSR People's Deputies to be convened, he has fallen into a trap because that body no longer exists either constitutionally or legally. He himself buried it by transferring power to the Supreme Soviet especially since even if the Congress convenes, Gorbachev will find there mainly—if not exclusively—deputies from Russia. The other republics are hardly likely to send their representatives.

Will the Minsk agreement find support in the Russian parliament? A joint session of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet today will be addressed by President Boris Yeltsin, and the deputies will be invited to ratify this historic document. Their Ukrainian and Belarussian colleagues did so two days earlier. According to the available information, it is meeting with support in the committees and commissions of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. It has also been approved by many political parties, but I repeat, everything will be decided today.

USSR Supreme Soviet Membership Noted

LD1212172191 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0943 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Remarks by Deputy Vyacheslav Vasiliyevich Volkov at the 12 December Supreme Soviet session in Moscow—live]

[Text] Esteemed deputies, Esteemed Presidium, and Esteemed President: Guided by the words of the deputies who have come to the microphone, I will say that today we are indeed on the threshhold of making a very important and historic decision. It is important and historic, first and foremost, because it is deciding the destiny of the former union, of the states which made it up and of the peoples who lived in it.

There is no need for me to point out retrospectively those earlier events. It is only for me to stress that both the Democratic Russia faction and the Democratic Russia bloc, as well as other democratically inclined factions and the Democratic Russia Movement have always taken the stand that the union should be preserved, but it should be preserved and formed only from the bottom, not from the top, taking into account the views of the states in it and the peoples living in it.

In this sense I wish to make an appeal from the Democratic Russia faction of deputies to members of the Supreme Soviet. The Democratic Russia faction supports the agreement between the heads of state of Belarus, the RSFSR, and the Ukraine on establishing the Commonwealth of Independent States. We view the agreement as the first step on the road to building a commonwealth from the bottom up on the initiative of the republics themselves. This is exactly the path that the Russian parliament has always advocated.

The last version of the draft treaty on a union of sovereign states did not unite the republics as it was meant to but only exacerbated the differences between them. This forced the state leaders of Belarus, the Ukraine and Russia to sign the agreement setting up the Commonwealth. A historically important step has been taken which seeks to preserve the societies and peoples which have emerged. We think that other states, too, taking account of the open nature of the Commonwealth and disregarding any political, religious, or cultural differences between the nationalities, will accede to the agreement.

In this situation, the role of people's deputies at all levels as guarantors of stability in society, as state figures implementing their policies on the basis of the views of the electorate, is particularly important. We, the members of the Democratic Russia faction, approving the determination and consistency of the actions of the RSFSR president directed toward preserving and developing the close economic ties between the member states of the former USSR, support the formula for setting up the Commonwealth contained in the agreement. We appeal to all parliamentary factions in the Supreme Soviet to support the agreement and to ensure its quickest possible ratification. We appeal to the people's deputies, the members of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, to support the actions of the presidents of the RSFSR and the Ukraine and the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus and to ratify the agreement on establishment of the Commonwealth.

This action by the RSFSR Supreme Soviet will open the road to a transition from the threat of coups and civil war to a civilized, nonviolent process of emerging from profound political crisis. We appeal to the soldiers, officers and generals of the armed forces, security services, and Internal Troops: the highest degree of responsibility today rests with you for the defense of the citizens of the Commonwealth, all our children, wives, and mothers, and to prevent any possible complications in ensuring the safety of the nuclear, strategic and tactical potential. It is your duty not to yield to provocation, not to permit any repetition of the Yugoslav tragedy on the territory of the new Commonwealth.

At the same time, we draw the attention of the initiators of the Commonwealth to the need for specific machinery to be drawn up without delay to provide comprehensive social protection for servicemen and members of their families. We also call upon the governments of foreign states to support the agreement and to give all the help they can to the new formation.

For the information of the people's deputies, members of the Supreme Soviet, this appeal is supported by the faction of deputies belonging to no party, the Left-Center faction, Free Russia, the Radical Democrats faction and the Workers' Alliance faction.

In conclusion, I would like to draw the attention of people's deputies to the fact that we must, in my opinion, after the ratification which I think has to take place and will take place today, get rid of the duality in the situation of those people's deputies from Russia who are also USSR People's Deputies from Russia. The duplication of their situation is such that they need to be rid of the need to attend the USSR Supreme Soviet, because in reality, having voted and endorsed the clause concerning the union of sovereign states and given the need to consider this clause, we are putting them in an awkward position and therefore, the next step would be adopting a resolution of the Supreme Soviet recalling RSFSR People's Deputies and USSR People's Deputies representing Russia from the USSR Supreme Soviet. Thank you for your attention.

Russian Deputies Recalled

LD1212182291 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1800 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] Today the RSFSR Supreme Soviet adopted a decision to recall the Russian deputies' group from both chambers of the Union parliament.

Yeltsin Urges Decision on USSR State Bank

LD1212212791 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 2000 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] Russian President Boris Yeltsin has declared that the republic's Supreme Soviet should make a decision, if not to expropriate, then at least to nationalize, the USSR central bank—meaning the USSR State Bank. At a meeting today with representatives of political parties in Russia, Yeltsin announced that the day before, during his conversation with USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev, he tried to explain that there is no need for a USSR central bank to exist, since other Union structures are already ending their existence. The president of the Soviet Union disagreed with this point of view.

Deputies Adopt Law on Document Registration

LD1312071291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1217 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Tamara Zamyatina]

[Excerpt] Moscow, 9 Dec (TASS)—From 1 January a single complaint against an official will cost the petitioner 10 rubles. In accordance with the law on the state levy adopted by the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, citizens will contribute between 5 and 1000 rubles for the registration of various documents relating to their living circumstances—from the annulment of marriages to departure abroad. [passage omitted]

Agree To Defer Minimum Wage Law

PM1212164391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 9 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Untitled report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, REUTER, and UPI roundup]

[Text] The RSFSR Supreme Soviet has agreed with Russian President B. Yeltsin's proposal to postpone the date of implementation of the RSFSR Law "On Raising the Minimum Wage" from 1 December 1991 to 1 January 1992.

The law envisages that the minimum wage will be raised to 342 rubles a month in organizations and institutions financed from budget sources, taking into account the compensation introduced in April 1991 in connection with the retail price increase.

Debate Money Transfers

PM1212163991 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Robert Minasov report: "Taxes for Tomorrow"]

[Text] The examination and adoption of the draft laws which form the basis of the new taxation system continued at the 9 December joint morning session of the two chambers of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet.

The draft law "On the Taxation of the Property of Physical Persons" was the first to be examined. This includes taxes on the owners of apartments, houses, dachas, garages, other structures, and means of transport. The tax on structures, premises, and accommodation is paid annually at the rate of 0.1 percent of their inventory valuation.

The tax rate for means of transport was determined. This law was adopted by parliament without arousing fierce debate, which cannot be said of another—the law "On State Duty."

A. Pochinok, chairman of the Commission on the Budget, Plans, Taxes, and Prices, was scathing about the amendment submitted on the RSFSR Government's behalf. The government proposed that duty "on the payment of sums to USSR citizens via money orders from abroad" be levied at the rate of 30 percent of the sum of the order in question. "Do you want to block off one of the channels whereby currency enters the country?"—was the indignant response of Pochinok and other deputies. Considerable efforts were required from the parliamentarians before agreed decisions were reached on the draft law.

Debate Fate of Buildings

PM1212161591 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Unattributed report: "At the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium"]

[Text] Who owns the prestigious Sovintsentr complex of buildings? Furious discussion flared up over this at the session of the Russian Supreme Soviet Presidium. Anatoliy Chubays, chairman of the State Commission on Property, proposed on the government's behalf that the Sovintsentr be transferred to RSFSR ownership and that a joint-stock company together with a congress of business circles be created on its basis. Aleksandr Pochinok, chairman of the Commission on the Budget, Plans, Taxes, and Prices, stated that the Russian budget now has more need of the $200 million which could be raised by selling this complex of building to foreign buyers. What will prevail in this dispute—economic advantage or political considerations? The presidium has postponed answering that question for a week.

The fact that another package of presidium draft decrees and government resolutions has been passed to the Supreme Soviet Commission for the Operational Legislative Support of Normative Acts is indicative of the establishment of collaboration between government and parliament.

Interrepublic Affairs

Adviser Warns of Ukraine Leaving Commonwealth

LD1212215291 Moscow TASS in English 1402 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Tamara Zamyatina]

[Text] Moscow December 12 TASS—If the Commonwealth of Independent States grows to the size of the former Soviet Union, Ukraine may quit the Union, Galina Starovoytova, Russian president's adviser on ethnic issues, said on Thursday.

She said Ukraine decided to support the idea to create the Union because it has mutual historic and economic ties with Russia and Belarus.

If other republics "join the new commonwealth very actively" it may force Ukraine to secede.

Starovoytova stressed that by signing the agreement Russia has voluntarily quit playing big brother and pursuing imperial and chauvinistic ambitions.

Starovoytova is a member of the Democratic Russia parliamentary faction. She believes the agreement should be sunplemented with a document on nuclear strategic and tactical weapons control, including medium-range missiles.

Yeltsin 'Confidant' on Gorbachev Resignation

LD1212200491 Budapest MTV Television Network in Hungarian 1830 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Excerpts] After Ukrainian and Belarussian approval, the Russian parliament by a sweeping majority has adopted the Brest agreement on creating the commonwealth of the three Slavic states. Now, the stance of the presidents of the Muslim republics is awaited in Moscow. Observers believe the planned meeting of Russian President Yeltsin and Kazakh President Nazarbayev will be the decisive factor in Gorbachev's future. [passage omitted]

I asked Russian Deputy Leonid Gurevich, a Yeltsin confidant, if the Russian President had really called on Gorbachev to resign. It is very probable, he replied. His time has expired, but as an experienced politician he could become, for example, the foreign representation of the new federation.

Sobchak: Commonwealth 'Enormous Step Forward'

LD1212230691 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Video report by correspondent S. Suntsov; from the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] The press statement circulated by Konstantin Lubenchenko points out the illegal nature of the Minsk accord. Among its dangerous consequences are the loss of single control over nuclear forces, the sliding of the republics into even greater economic and military-political crisis, and the drawing of the Central Asian republics into the orbit of influence of the Islamic states, which are on the threshold of producing nuclear weapons. But here is another point of view:

[Begin recording] [St. Petersburg Mayor Sobchak] I consider the agreement which has been signed to be an enormous step forward because it engages the Ukraine in the solving of all the issues.

[Sunstov] Well, this turns out to be at the expense of the other republics, which were not invited to Minsk.

[Sobchak] You know, how this happened is another question. The only apprehension that I feel here is that this may become, let us say, a prelude or prologue to confrontation. I consider that the presidents of these three republics are obliged to travel to Alma-Ata and are obliged to agree to sit at the negotiating table and agree on the inclusion of the republics, on their joining the commonwealth, and on the restoration of the country's blood circulation. [end recording]

Official on East Europe Joining Commonwealth

OW1212210591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2027 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] It can't be ruled out that the new Commonwealth may be joined not only by republics of the former Union, but also some East European states. That was intimated to journalists Wednesday [11 December] in Moscow by the RSFSR President's press-secretary Pavel Voshchanov, who hinted at a Balkan country. He also mentioned a possible entry by Moldova.

P. Voshchanov referred to the communique signed Dec 12 by the Presidents of Russia and Moldova—Boris Yeltsin and Mircea Snegur—which states that Moldova considers with interest the Comonwealth and a possibility to join it.

The next stage in forming the Commonwealth, said Voshchanov, could be a meeting of Central Asian republics in Alma-Ata (possibly coming on Saturday [14 December]—IF [INTERFAX]). Apart from Boris Yelstin, attendance is expected by the Chairman of Belarussia's Supreme Soviet Stanislav Shushkevich and a spokesman of the Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk.

To a question by the INTERFAX correspondent, Pavel Voshchanov replied that in his opinion the main economic structures of the former Union would cease to exist in January next year. But he expects some central bodies to survive through February and March.

Khasbulatov Grants Interview on Commonwealth

LD1212000591 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2122 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Interview with Russian Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov by People's Deputy O.M. Poptsov in Khasbulatov's office in Moscow on 11 December—recorded]

[Text] [Poptsov] It is only an hour and a half since the Seoul-Moscow aircraft landed and we are already in the office of Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet. A meeting of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet has taken place and we are here in order to ask questions which are so necessary and so important.

We have entered a time in which historic events are taking place not over a period of months and years but within days. Ruslan Imranovich, these events reached you during your stay in Korea, but you have flown in, you have already heard that an agreement has been signed on a commonwealth of three states, the Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus, and I do not exaggerate if I say that the whole commonwealth on the territory of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the whole world community is to a vast extent still abuzz with this event. What is your assessment of what has happened? And what joys or anxieties do you feel about this?

[Khasbulatov] You know, I do not feel any particular joys but I do have very many anxieties. I would like to explain this. The point is that what has happened—this alliance of three states—this is the optimum response, reaction, to the chaotic disintegration of the Soviet Union. I would like to say that this idea arose not as the result of some accidental meetings between three leaders of our republics. This is a deeply thought out reaction to the way events are developing here.

I would simply like to recall the history of this alliance. You may recall that at the start of this year and then during the spring this idea was discussed. At first it was a question of three republics, then four were mentioned, and President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan also joined in with this idea. I recall how intensively the foreign correspondents and our Soviet correspondents grilled me on this question.

Then, all the same, the pressure from the central administration and from Mikhail Sergeyevich to reject that idea was very strong. Unfortunately, we returned to it only after some delay. It should have been done a year or two ago, and we might have avoided such a decline in political and economic authority and in our ties. Therefore, you know, this should be viewed without exultation and without grief as a natural, historically conditioned movement in the development of the processes going on in our country.

Thus, I believe that a great service has been done by the leaders of the three states, who have overcome their own, internal motives to reach the necessity ...

[Poptsov, interrupting] It is, in practice, a case where we played to overtake: We would not follow in the wake of events.

[Khasbulatov] I would not even talk about overtaking, I would not. All the same, we should have gone for the conclusion of such an alliance, at least when the basic principles were drawn up. That was at the beginning of this year, but better late than never. Therefore, I believe that we ought to welcome it and to reward, according to their merits, the leaders of the three union republics who concluded that very serious agreement.

You know, we are dealing with a vacuum both of power and of administration. After all, it was no coincidence that we declared ourselves the heir to the Soviet Union, including in international (?acts), and it was no coincidence, nor was it out of any kind of arrogance, that we said we were prepared to pay the other states' debts. It was harsh necessity that forced us to do it, and when prominent, leading republics join in this process, of course it will be much easier for us to exercise the functions of the former union, but on a completely different foundation. All the same, we proposed that very plan over a year ago.

[Poptsov] Ruslan Imranovich, the subject of Gorbachev has again become the main topic, or one of the principal topics, in connection with this event. Attention is concentrated on the president of the country. Something astonishing has happened. That very man who constantly appealed and said that if the idea of unification, the idea of a union, did not rise up from the ashes one way or another, he would consider his political career finished, and now that idea, the agreement on cooperation and on a commonwealth which has emerged, would appear to embody that idea, yet suddenly there is this intense opposition to it. One cannot help thinking that it is as though the main thing was not the idea of some kind of union but a different idea: What is my place? Are you worried by that reaction from the president?

[Khasbulatov] Yes, I am. If you have paid attention, over the last year and a half at least, while criticizing Mikhail Sergeyevich, I have always given him due credit for his contribution, and I believe now that he occupies a very serious place in our political history. To put it bluntly, he has inscribed his name in history as a positive figure.

I have always been concerned by Mikhail Sergeyevich's ambitious aspirations, and in particular I simply do not understand his position now. I simply do not understand. Of course, I reject that position; it is simply destructive, this position. I am not speaking about factors connected to the fact that we have literally saved ourselves from physical and political death, this maybe seems not very serious politically. I even leave these issues aside, but now when it is a matter of the reconstruction, practically, of an alliance of our states on a different basis, on a treaty basis, what should a leader, as I see it, who is really concerned about the fate of the peoples, about the fate of the fatherland, do? He should welcome it and say: Excellent, thank God you have come to this. I will join you, I am prepared to help you. Instead of this there is an announcement: Let us fight, make war; artificial institutions are put forward—is Gorbachev announcing civil war, or what?

[Poptsov] Well, I hope that this is not taking place.

[Khasbulatov] I hope that sober forces will nevertheless prevail, but you know I am simply suprised.

[Poptsov] I want to say, to point out to us, to everyone that the most desirable economic area, an area of reforms is being formed, and I think this is an event which offers a way out of the blind alley, and in this regard I have a question. This reaction, the lightning-quick reaction I would say, by the Ukrainian parliament—let us be frank, it was renowned as an obstinate parliament—the Belarussian parliament, I would say that here they expressed both desire and an unbelievable distance from uncertainty; even taking into account a certain imperfection which there is in the agreement from the point of view of style, which maybe there is, there is the aspiration not to lose this idea, the idea of uniting at this critical, I would say, catastrophic moment. This prevailed. In this regard—I do not want to, I will knock on wood—regarding how the discussion will go in the Russian parliament after the president speaks tomorrow, I will leave it to your prediction.

[Khasbulatov] Yes. You know I would not say, as you are trying to hint, that our Russian parliament is more conservative...

[Poptsov, interrupting] No, I did not mean ...

[Khasbulatov, interrupting] ... than the Belarussian or Ukrainian parliaments. No, this is not the case.

We have a harsh parliament. We have, you know very well. You know very well, you yourselves take part in all of our activities, in our clashes—in inverted commas—as it were, of opinions and so on. Well, I could not recall, when I was flying back today, I looked through virtually all of our laws. There are 198 draft laws and resolutions. You know, there is not one of them that could be characterized by conservatism of any kind. We have the harshest of clashes, but we have always tabled the necessary decisions, resolutions, and laws. I have absolute faith that we will table the necessary decisions in the future as well. Of course, we will approve it. I have no doubts, but you are right. There is, of course criticism like this program.

[Poptsov] I will say one thing, that at a rally yesterday, Nikolay Ilyich Travkin, the leader of the Russian Democratic Party, warned of opposition. Watching this rally, I had a feeling of bitterness. Yes, a feeling of bitterness, because Nikolay Ilyich was always very close to me personally, and when the extreme right is closing in like that, right under your eyes, as well as extreme left radical tendencies, it seems to me that democracy is acquiring the wrong kind of face and it arrouses a total lack of understanding among the people. For it seems to me that precisely this kind of commonwealth will save the idea of this Russian-speaking population.

[Khasbulatov] Of course, of course, and it saves the idea of a union which Travkin speaks about himself, incidentally.

[Poptsov] Yes. That is one point. You will see Nikolay Ilyich's tragedy has a rather different aspect. I really do like him very much and I really do respect him and have encouraged his activities and have tried to help him as far as possible, but here it is a matter of a few other things. At one time he was rejected by Gorbachev. He became his opponent. Unfortunately, the Russian president did not make use of him either; he also rejected him. He should have been given a post of some kind, I don't know, to keep him happy.

[Khasbulatov] I do not think that this is what he wanted, what he was moving toward, all the more so as he stresses so often that it is not a matter of a post.

[Poptsov] He does not stress it but he should have been brought in somehow, as an advisor, used ...

[Khasbulatov, interrupting] Nikolay Ilyich headed a committee [words indistinct as both men speak simultaneously] he headed one. He has said the following himself with bitterness—I just thought that really, sincerely, when they adopted a resolution that I should leave my post. I did so and left it, but it seems that it would have been possible not to leave it. You see. I really did try to persuade him myself. I did not want him to leave; he is a talented person. Of course losing him-...[changes thought] He does not pretend to have any theoretical knowledge, but he is a very honest man and I have always openly valued him. His ideas have been used in our work, but in this case I think that he himself will vote in favor of a union...

[Poptsov, interrupting] I hope so.

[Khasbulatov] of republics. I am convinced of this. I do not see any opponents here. If these people will be opposed to this alliance, you know, I think the electorate will recall them, and I will help them in this.

[Poptsov] Well, Ruslan Imvranovich, normally such things end by saying: Let us last until Monday, but we have Thursday in front of us. You have had several sleepless nights at the talks. I have heard that they were fruitful and difficult. Let us last to this Thursday; let us knock on wood again, and we will end our broadcast in the belief that tomorrow the Russian parliament will show political wisdom.

[Khasbulatov] I do not doubt it. You know, I do not really like it very much when people criticize the Russian parliament.

[Poptsov] Thank you.

Further on Khasbulatov Comments

LD1212203591 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Interview with Russian Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov by People's Deputy R. K. Mikailov; place and date not given; carried in the "Parliamentary Herald" program—live or recorded]

[Text] [Mikailov] As you know from the direct relay of the proceedings of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet session, the Supreme Soviet of Russia has adopted a decision, which is historic in my view and in the view of my colleagues. A treaty signed by the leaders of the three independent states has been ratified and the 1922 treaty which laid the foundation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has been revoked. A new era has begun in the history of our country.

Ruslan Imranovich, this is the kind of event on which we must congratulate one another. I congratulate you, too, on today's work and, perhaps, even victory. Ruslan Imaronovich, what does it mean for Russia?

[Khasbulatov] First, I would like to congratulate the inhabitants of Russia and our citizens on the successful results of the first and the most complex stage, which involved preparation, and of the second stage when the leaders of the three republics signed this agreement on setting up the commonwealth of Belarus, Ukraine, and the RSFSR. This is, of course, a very serious agreement.

Third [as heard], some people, both officials and even some deputies, are somehow inclined, let us say, to criticize this agreement, saying that it is destroying the Union. There are critics both on the left and on the right. There are enough of them. I would like to say and to assure our citizens that this agreement is precisely aimed at bringing order to the chaotic disintegration of the union state which is now happening very quickly.

Of course, because these influential republics have declared the creation of the Commonwealth, a confederative formation, this must inspire all of us with new hopes. This must instill, and I believe is instilling, confidence in us in that we, as the states which are close to one another and which have common borders, glorious century-long cooperation, and friendly relations, will be preserving our historical affinity.

That is one aspect. The other aspect is the attempt to put the agreement of the three states, the three republics, in opposition to the Asian or central Asian republics, for instance, to Kazakhstan, and the Transcaucasian republics. I immediately would like to avert these accusations, as this agreement envisages the possibility of involving—literally the need to involve—other republics in this process. Intensive talks are under way with Kazakhstan, the Central Asian, and the Transcaucasia republics. Mircha Snegur, president of Moldova, already is holding talks with President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin.

This agreement indeed is a universal one and envisages that this treaty process is open for other peoples and other states to join, while respecting their integrity, their originality, ethnic customs, cultures, and their wish to build a new economy on the basis of a mixed economy and a market economy.

Speaking about the economic sphere, this is a very important basis for continuity in our economic relations. After all, the thing is that they are being disrupted right before our eyes.

Therefore, possibilities are arising for us to improve our affairs, all our very serious affairs, to realize major economic reforms, in cooperation, agreeing on our mutual plans while putting our economic relations in order.

So what next? Next, of course, we expect the signing of a large number of documents on specific areas of cooperation which are already being developed and implemented together with the republics. This is about a political agreement. The common principles on which new relations will be based are being proclaimed. To actually implement this, of course, intensive development is necessary, as is the joint conclusion of specific agreements on specific issues.

[Mikailov] To refute our opponents, I would like to say here that we have not destroyed the union but have created a new union on completely different principles of mutual advantage and, so to speak, voluntary membership.

[Khasbulatov] Of course we have laid down the prerequisites. Of course, in itself the signing, the development, the signing of such an important document plays an exceptional role. It creates a coalition, a legal basis so to speak, so that this new alliance, new commonwealth, really is on the path toward the actual realization of its plans for the integration of its economic, political, spiritual, and cultural potential.

Naturally, by doing this we are trying to preserve what can be preserved. You know very well that the union state is collapsing literally before our eyes. Therefore, it is completely wrong to suspect us of destruction. We are reacting. We are trying to save what can be saved. Moreover at the top, the main goal, so to speak, of all this very complicated and difficult activity is the interests of the people, our people, who are suffering under the burden of economic difficulties under the burden of the mess.

Plus, you see, very many problems have arisen in connection with the deterioration in interethnic and ethnic relations.

Such an agreement on a commonwealth is, of course, a very serious basis for putting many relations in order. We only need to use this possibility correctly—maybe really the last historical possiblity to somehow come to rapprochement. We proposed this a year ago. We had specific agreements with the republics who had signed and with Kazakhstan, but at that time the central administration very succesfully disrupted these plans. If this alliance had been realized a year ago, I think that the economic situation would not have become so bad so fast.

We would proceed jointly toward the establishment of a market economy and carry out profound reforms, agrarian reform and privatization, which would not hurt our people so much. There are many things that could be accomplished during this year, but...

[Mikailov, interrupting] Even in the few days since the signing of this treaty, some encouraging results have been achieved. Agreement on hard currency and certain types of supplies has actually been reached.

[Khasbulatov] The fact that it has been possible to reach fundamental agreement on single strategic forces is very important. After all, the possibility that atomic weapons could slide out of control is very dangerous. This is a situation in which every republic is striving to set up units of this kind—you know what kind—but especially units connected with strategic and heavy armaments. It has been possible to reach agreement even on this. In this way, we not only have reassured the Army but also have created confidence that the principles on which a modern army is based remain unchanged, that the Army will not be replicated on ethnic lines. This is very important because it is a very serious matter.

Of course, it also will be easier to provide social security for servicemen if we work together. It will cost less. Just think what it would cost if each state set up powerful armed forces on its own. It would cost them a colossal amount. We realize all this.

We must preserve and support our military people and provide a proper solution to their housing problems. Generally speaking, there are now very many similar problems. There are very many. I believe that it was very important that military people—commanders of military districts and many divisional commanders—came out quite decisively in support of this agreement on the union at the conference held by the president. They have grasped the situation perfectly well. Naturally, we consider this a very good sign, one which will help us sort out our relations with the republics and create more favorable conditions for our joint development in many areas.

[Mikailov] Ruslan Imranovich, no doubt this is a question that worries many. People perhaps are curious even to know what the fate of central bodies will be.

[Khasbulatov] As far as I am concerned, this question is fairly clear. Naturally, the evolution of central bodies cannot be accomplished in a single day. We must now give some thought to curtailing the operations of the central administration but without upsetting those spheres of activities which they now regulate one way or the other.

Naturally, the governments of those three states which signed the agreement, and the governments which will sign it in future, must give some thought, together with the central administration, to the evolution of central institutions so they can be transformed into the regulatory bodies which are needed for the fully fledged existence of the Commonwealth.

[Mikailov] Reexamination of their functions?

[Khasbulatov] Of course, reexamination of their functions and size. There must be a substantial reduction. Some of them should, perhaps, be relocated in Minsk. I am very impressed by the choice of Minsk as, well, not the capital but the center, the headquarters, of coalition structures, coalition bodies for the regulation of affairs by the three countries, the three republics. This also is very important.

After all, Moscow is reproached for having bureaucratized everything. The Russian authorities are reproached from time to time for trying to create a new center to replace the old one. Now the sides have agreed that it would be best if this coalition center was set up in Minsk.

[Mikailov] Yes, it is now evident that Russia is not trying to hog things.

[Khasbulatov] Well, of course. It might appear a purely formal matter. It is now quite obvious to everybody. That also is a great achievement.

In general, I would like to draw attention to a very peaceful and constructive aspect of this agreement, one which really is aimed at encouraging unifying tendencies. This is the appeal to other states to support and endorse the agreement. Other republics could even become co-founders of the new Commonwealth. In fact, a number of people asked this very question today—will the new ones be participants or founders? I see nothing wrong if other republics support this agreement and become co-founders. They would have the status of co-founders. I entirely agree with this.

[Mikailov] We lose nothing from this, nor does the union.

[Khasbulatov] On the contrary, we gain. We become qualitatively stronger when other republics join in as founders. I do not see any contradiction there. After all, we have adopted another very important document. This is the appeal to all peoples and other republics. This specifically stresses the universal and extraordinarily humanistic nature of this organization. This is a very interesting appeal to the peoples.

[Mikailov] It openly renounces ethnic and...

[Khasbulatov, interrupting] Religious and ethnic criteria, of course. In our day and age, of course, no agreement of this kind can operate successfully if certain restrictions are applied in it, if first-class and second-class categories are singled out. That is not our style. The parliament and the president have demonstrated repeatedly a high degree of loyalty and respect to all republics and all peoples, including the Russian republics, the Union republics, and the independent states.

In this specific connection, I would like to make an appeal to our peoples within the Russian Federation. They are experiencing difficult times. Their dissatisfaction with the authorities, with us, with the authorities here in Moscow, with the local authorities, is quite understandable, but I would like to appeal to them to display patience and respect for the views of different people, to have more trust in us. We are sincerely striving to better the lot of our peoples.

Of course, it is now inappropriate for conflicts to be flaring up, conflicts that sometimes develop into armed clashes. I believe that this is not the best time for stirring up strife and instilling hate, for manifestations of intolerance. All of this has to be set aside by the imperative of our vital problems. All our strength has to be put into creative activity, into the creation of a normal economy which can provide people with normal and appropriate human conditions for their material and cultural lives. All of the fairly dynamic activity of our parliament and our president, as you can see, and particularly recently, has been geared to achieving these goals.

I would very much like our people to back these agreements on the Commonwealth and to understand the real meaning of these agreements, in which all human and humanitarian rights indeed are recognized, in line with international standards I must add. I call on our fellow citizens to understand that the agreement reflects above all the interests of our people.

Rutskoy Criticizes 'Ambiguities' in Accord

LD1112174391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1658 GMT 11 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow, 11 Dec (TASS)—"I hope that the Russian parliament will make a choice in favor of the Commonwealth of Independent States," stated RSFSR Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy, speaking today to participants in a congress of young political leaders.

At the same time, according to Rutskoy, the creators of the community are to be criticized. In particular, he noted, the Minsk documents were drawn up "in haste" and they contain ambiguities regarding both socioeconomic and military problems. "Hasty decisions are impermissible in politics because it is the people who will pay for mistakes in policy," the Russian vice president stated. In his opinion, the leaders of the RSFSR, the Ukraine, and Belarus should have invited Nursultan Nazarbayev and colleagues from other republics to their meeting. Incidentally, Aleksandr Rutskoy himself learned about the decisions adopted in Minsk from reports on the radio.

The Russian figure was not inclined to predict how the army would act and how it would treat the oath if there is no "abdication" of the USSR president. At the same time he was clearly in favor of the indivisibility of the armed forces in general and of nuclear forces in particular. According to him, the desire of certain political leaders for the creation of their own armies "will not lead to anything good."

Kozyrev on Commonwealth, USSR UN Membership

LD1212155491 Moscow TASS in English 1313 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 12 TASS—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev said on Thursday [12 December] the agreement on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States signed by the presidents of Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia outside Brest last Sunday [8 December] violates neither the U.N. Charter nor the European process.

He said the creation of the Slavic Union does not end the Soviet Union's U.N. membership. At the same time, Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia have said they will take the responsibility for the Soviet Union's international commitments and become its legal successors.

Kozyrev said this right will be delegated to the commonwealth after talks between all concerned sides.

The commonwealth "will move very fast along the path of integration," Kozyrev said. Its founders have proclaimed respect for the peoples and states and recognised their interconnection in all spheres.

He stressed the need to get rid of the republics' "allergy to the centre" to speed up the creation of a closer commonwealth.

Russian state adviser Sergey Shakhray said the agreement comes into effect from the moment it is ratified. The agreement allows Russian Republic President Boris Yeltsin and presidents of other republics to "work out a formula for joining the Commonwealth".

The idea to create the Commonwealth was developed a year ago together with Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev. Since the text of the agreement is identical to that of the treaties between Kazakhstan and other Soviet republics, Kazakhstan can be regarded the Commonwealth's co-founder, Shakhray said.

Political Youth Leaders Oppose Minsk Agreement

LD1112210991 Moscow TASS in English 2049 GMT 11 Dec 91

[By TASS Diplomatic Correspondents Aleksandras Burdis and Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow December 11 TASS—Five of six political parties and movements participating in a congress for young politicians here this week denounced the Minsk agreement signed on Sunday [8 December] proclaiming the end of the Soviet Union and the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States as "an illegal act".

The document signed by leaders of the Democratic Party of Russia, the Russian Union of Young Christian Democrats, the Christian Movement of Ukraine and the Union of Young Constitutional Democrats and the Russian Youth Union, called on the leaders of Russia, Belorussia and Ukraine to "listen to the voice of reason and halt short-sighted actions which will lead to the devastation of our fatherland."

The document also contains an appeal to the youth of the sovereign republics to sign without further delay the draft agreement on the Union of Sovereign Republics supported by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

In a separate statement, the Republican Party of the Russian Federation (RPRF), also at the youth congress, came out strongly in favour of the Minsk agreement. "In light of the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the refusal of several republics to sign the draft union treaty, the decision to found a commonwealth of independent states was a dire necessity."

The RPRF invoked the Russian Parliament's ratification of the commonwealth. They also asked all former Soviet republics to join.

Yeltsin Receives Moldovan President Snegur

LD1212140191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1325 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Gennadiy Talalayev]

[Text] Moscow, 12 Dec (TASS)—A meeting between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Moldovan President Mircea Snegur, who arrived in Moscow today, has begun at the Russian "White House."

It is expected that during the talk they will discuss the question of Moldova's participation in the Commonwealth of Independent States, documents on the creation of which were signed on 8 December by the leaders of Russia, Belarus, and the Ukraine.

It is possible that a document on Moldova's joining the commonwealth will be signed immediately after the talks. It would thus become the fourth member.

Mircea Snegur will fly to Minsk today and will be in Kiev tomorrow.

Congratulates Snegur on Election

OW1212164891 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1450 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian President Boris Yeltsin met with Moldova's President Mircea Snegur in Moscow Thursday [12 December]. Congratulating Mr. Snegur on his election as president of Moldova, Boris Yeltsin noted that it is the sign of stabilization in the republic which is in the interests of Russia.

After the meeting the two sides are expected to sign a protocol on economic cooperation.

Before the meeting Prresident Snegur told IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent that Moldova welcomes the Commonwealth of Independent States and will develop cooperation with them. However, the question of Moldova's membership in the Commonwealth will not be considered in the near future.

Discusses Commonwealth Membership

LD1212225691 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By correspondent I. Pankov]

[Text] A meeting has been held in the Russian White House today between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Mircea Snegur, president of the Republic of Moldova. During their conversation the question of Moldova's participation in the Commonwealth of Independent States was discussed. The participants in the meeting signed a joint communique and answered journalists' questions.

[Begin recording] [Snegur] Our attitude is extremely positive to the agreement on a Commonwealth of Independent States. To be frank, being here today in Moscow, I have been attentively following the debates in parliament and worried, together with you, and am pleased that the agreement was ratified. The president of Moldova intends to go to Minsk and Kiev and then to make more in-depth choices.

[Yeltsin] (?I was tasked with) putting the finishing touches to an agreement on a Commonwealth of Independent States today. Everything has been frankly told, but the republic will decide for itself as an independent state. Also discussed at the meeting were the ratification of a bilateral treaty and certain aspects of economic cooperation. [end recording]

Signs Communique With Snegur

AU1312111391 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 0905 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, ROMPRES, 13/12/1991—On December 12, the president of the Republic of Moldova, Mircea Snegur, met in Moscow with the president of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin, announced the agency "MOLDOVA PRES".

A communique was signed before the close of the meeting. Afterwards, President Snegur said he welcomed the creation of the commonwealth of independent states, on the basis of an agreement that is going to be examined in detail by the leaders of the Republic of Moldova.

For his part, the president of Russia, Boris Yeltsin, told "MOLDOVA PRES" that he was satisfied with the results of the negotiations with President Snegur and hoped that the interview they had would mark the beginning of a new phase of mutually advantageous cooperation between two independent states.

In a short press conference held at the representation of the Republic of Moldova in Moscow, President Mircea Snegur mentioned that his interview with Yeltsin was friendly. The two parties took into account the fact that the Soviet Union exists neither under the form of a (?renewed) federation, nor under that of a confederation. "We focused on the problems related to the Minsk agreement. The creation of a commonwealth of independent states", added Boris Yeltsin, "can be considered a positive event as the economies of the republics of the former union are, for the time being, closely linked to one another.

President Mircea Snegur officially invited President Boris Yeltsin to pay a visit to the Republic of Moldova.

During the negotiations, the two parties agreed that Russia ratify soon the agreement of cooperation with the Republic of Moldova, mentioned President Yeltsin, who added that, after the election of Mircea Snegur as president by the whole people, there are no reasons not to ratify the agreement. President Boris Yeltsin also said that the Russian parliament would examine the issue of the recognition of the independence of Moldova.

Georgian Agreement Depends on South Ossetia

PM1212185191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Untitled report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, INTERFAX, RIA, REUTER column]

[Text] Yegor Gaydar has announced that the Russian Government has decided not to sign the 1992 economic agreement with Georgia until the situation in South Ossetia stabilizes.

He said that "this is a terrible sanction since many of Georgia's enterprises are on the verge of closure." However, the vice premier warned that this step may also strike at Russia, which "is considerably dependent on Georgia, for manganese shipments, for instance."

Federation Affairs

Yeltsin Meets Party Leaders, Predicts Unrest

LD1212215891 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] Boris Yeltsin held a meeting in the Russian White House with leaders of the leading political parties of Russia. Replying to journalists about his assessment of the results of the discussion, Boris Yeltsin replied:

[Begin Yeltsin recording] First, I feel satisfaction that a real multiparty situation is appearing. A year ago we could not even dream of this or speak about it, and now there are real parties, real movements, which represent certain strata of the population. That is the first thing.

The second thing is that a dialogue is starting between the party leaders and the president and government of Russia. It still has rough edges. It must be said that at present there is more criticism aimed at me than there is coming from me, but I think that this can be corrected.

Third, there is a very realistic assessment that we have ahead of us a difficult situation in connection with the transition to the market. We will have to deal with the people—including crowds in the street—not by using strongarm methods, not by using the army, not by using the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and not by using the Internal Troops. All the parties, movements, and leaders will have to go work with people in order to restrain them when there is real dissatisfaction. It is very likely that there will be dissatisfaction, because the circumstances will be very, very hard. There are very few, almost no, states or countries that could manage to avoid this during the transition to the market.

We plan that in the future there will be a system of meetings on various questions at least once a month, in order to coordinate our actions in some way. The most important thing now is to seek a compromise. Every party, no matter what the rules of its movement, which articles, or whatever else it has, should reach some sort of compromise at this, Russia's most difficult moment.

For one year we will only move one or two steps. Each party should move a little. Again I say that I am not calling for unity; I am not calling for all to march in step but to find some compromise in our actions. [end recording]

Government To Maintain Contact With Republics

OW1212155291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1450 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia's Foreign Ministry has two priorities at the moment, its spokesman told IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent. In the first place, he explained, the ministry has to "maintain contacts with republics that used to form the USSR". Under the circumstances this is expressed primarily in explaining the essence of agreements signed in Brest by the leaders of Russia, Belorussia and the Ukraine. Secondly, Russian diplomacy pursues a similar goal on the world scene. In particular it is engaged in preparations for a visit to Moscow by the U.S. Secretary of State James Baker whose meeting with Russia's foreign minister Andrey Kozyrev is scheduled for Sunday the 15th. Besides, the ministry is working out the details of the upcoming visit to Italy by the Russian President Boris Yeltsin. According to the spokesman, this visit is to take place in mid December.

Foreign Ministry on Gorbachev Aide Criticism

OW1312072591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1710 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The press secretariat of Russia's Foreign Ministry has found it necessary to respond to a statement made by the USSR President's press secretary Andrey Grachev at the briefing Dec 10. A. Grachev criticized Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev who had commented on the future role of M. Gorbachev. A. Grachev remarked that "a civilized society should have more civilized and responsible ministers".

To that the Ministry's secretariat replies that "the tone in which A. Grachev treats the Minister's words taken out of context is reminiscent of the style in which discussions went on at the former central committee of the Communist Party, Grachev's previous workplace".

A. Grachev said nothing—they point out at the Ministry—about A. Kozyrev's repeated public recognition of M. Grbachev's enormous contribution to the process of reforms in the country.

Defense Budget Estimated at R323.5 Billion

OW1312021291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2027 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The defense expenditure of the Russian Federation will amount next year to rb [rubles] 323.5 bn [billion] by a preliminary estimate circulated among Russia's deputies December 12. The total defense budget of the Soviet Union may reach rb 529.4 bn in 1992, Russia's share being 61.3%.

The calculations have been made in 1992 prices according to the price index of 4.2.

With the planned reductions of military expenditure coming through, Russia's share in their financing may go down by rb 50-60 bn.

Yeltsin on Stance Toward Paying USSR's Debts

OW1312123991 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1119 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President Boris Yeltsin reaffirmed Russia's adherence to the agreement on collective responsibility for the USSR's external debt signed by 9 republics earlier.

"We'll pay our share of the former USSR's debts", he told IF [INTERFAX] correspondents Boris Grischenko and Yevgeniy Terekhov on Thursday. According to the Russian leader, there are 3 republics repudiating their responsibility for the union's debts. "We'll shoulder this part of the debts to prevent the union from being disgraced," B. Yeltsin pointed out. President Yeltsin believes that this will open the world market to Russia.

Russia's share, said B. Yeltsin, amounted to 61.1% of the total USSR debt. If Russia shouldered the shares of the republics which refuse to pay, this would make up 64%. "It's not a very great difference, and we'll be able to cope with it", B. Yeltsin stressed.

President Yeltsin was speaking to IF's correspondents upon conclusion of his meeting with the leaders of Russia's political parties and said he was satisfied that "a genuine multiparty system is emerging". According to him, a dialogue with real parties representing definite population sections was beginning to take shape.

According to the president, participants in the meeting were well aware of the difficulties the country was faced with on its road to free market. All parties, movements and leaders will have to move toward free market side-by-side with the people, maybe even with mobs, but never rely on the force of army or interior ministry troops, said B. Yeltsin.

The main thing now, according to him, was to look for compromise solutions. What was needed for the next year or so were mutual concessions, rather than monolithic unity. 'We'll always be able to get dissociated. We'll split when order is reinstated."

Russia's President said that he intended to hold such "round-table" consultations wit the leaders of political parties every month.

Government Sets Up Nuclear Monitoring Process

PM1012152591 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 4 Dec 91 First Edition p 7

[O. Plakhotnikova report: "In Sight of the 'Peaceful Atom'"]

[Text] By the end of this year procedures are due to be have been elaborated for transporting, collecting, and burying radioactive substances and sources of ionizing radiation on Russian territory. A directive to this effect has been received from the RSFSR Council of Ministers by the State Committee for the Supervision of Safe Working Practices in the Atomic Power Industry, the State Committee for Public Health and Epidemiological Oversight, the State Committee for the Elimination of the Consequences of the Chernobyl Disaster, and the RSFSR Ministry of the Use of Nature and Environmental Protection.

Within the next few months a concept for radiation protection and economic activity on the polluted territories will appear. Work will begin on a State Register of radioactive waste burial sites. In the long term there are plans to set up an RSFSR State Program for handling radioactive waste and spent nuclear materials.

Additional testing for radioactive pollution (and not just that caused by Chernobyl) is needed in cities, industrial centers, major vacation resorts, and rural localities. Then decontamination will begin.

Over the next year a register will be compiled of citizens suffering from radiation exposure following accidents at nuclear facilities and as a result of work utilizing these dangerous substances. The Russian Ministry of Health and Social Support has been entrusted with monitoring their state of health and sanitation measures.

'Democratic Russia's' Ponomarev Interviewed

PM1212141591 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[Interview with Lev Ponomarev, member of the Democratic Russia Coordinating Council, by Mikhail Tarasov under the "Parties and Movements" rubric; place and date not given: "On the Agenda—A Split"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] The second congress of the "Democratic Russia" movement, which was held in Moscow 9-10 December, was stormy and ended with three parties simultaneously leaving the Movement. Now the passions have subsided and the time has come to ask how this has affected the Movement's future. Lev Ponomarev, member of the Democratic Russia Coordinating Council, now answers our correspondent's questions.

[Tarasov] The period between the first and second congresses was relatively short—just a year. Clearly there was a weighty reason for that. Is it to do with the "splitters?"

[Ponomarev] Not entirely. From the moment of its formation our Movement set itself two program tasks: combatting the CPSU's monopoly and building a civil society. After the August events the situation changed: The CPSU's monopoly of power no longer exists. Thus it is necessary to move forward. In addition, three parties within Democratic Russia—the Democratic Party of Russia, the Russian Christian Democratic Movement, and the Constitutional Democratic Party (Party of People's Freedom)—formed the "People's Accord" bloc, which has begun to regularly vote against the Movement's main resolutions. The ideological and program delimitation caused great tension. The divergence between the bloc and the main section of "Democratic Russia" became apparent with regard to the Novo-Ogarevo process and the problem of the borders and the national-state arrangement of the country. The bloc advocated that the Union be preserved but renewed.

We also saw the future of the Movement itself differently. "People's Accord" thought that its non-party members would eventually have to make up their minds and join one of the parties (which would be evidence of their political maturity, it was argued). In other words, there was a campaign to review the Rules permitting both individual and collective membership.

The solution of these questions could not be delayed. Only a congress could resolve the contradictions.

[Tarasov] How do you view its results? Does it not seem to you that it was somewhat chaotic?

[Ponomarev] Possibly, but at the same time it was successful. We discussed the Movement's aims and tasks. The discussion emphasized the more detailed elaboration of the principles of building a civil society. All these things were reflected in the Rules and did not cause major disagreements. Difficulties surfaced, as was to be expected, in the discussion of the point on forms of membership of the Movement. Incidentally, the Democratic Party of Russia's leadership (Travkin did not attend the congress) warned in advance that in the event of defeat the supporters of collective membership would leave the congress. The vote on this question showed that they formed no more than 15 percent of those present in the hall.

[Tarasov] Then there occurred what the mass media unanimously called a "split." Is that how you see it, too?

[Ponomarev] It could be called that. The losers were forced to withdraw. We were prepared for that, but this was not a spontaneous split, it was an objective, conscious split, which does not mean that we have become enemies. On the contrary, it is now easier for us to form a coalition on all the concrete questions where our interests coincide without wasting our efforts on internal struggles.

[Tarasov] Father Gleb Yakunin even called the withdrawal of some representatives of the "People's Accord" bloc a "cleansing," but does it not conceal an impatience with alternative thinking?

[Ponomarev] It is rather a question of the respect of the interests of the minority in the political organization, but it is well known that in developed democracies all questions are resolved by a vote and no other way. By an arithmetical majority, as they say.

Furthermore, the departure of those who disagreed merely means that in the future these parties will not delegate their representatives to the leading organs. But at the same time those of their representatives who join Democratic Russia on an individual basis can remain there with no trouble. This is a matter for the members themselves and the regional organizations.

As you can see, the congress settled all the tasks confronting it, including the election of a section of the Council of Representatives which was held there.

[Tarasov] Your assessment of events, it seems to me, reflects the view from the presidium. Do you think that the congress satisfied those people sitting in the hall facing the rostrum?

[Ponomarev] There was undoubtedly some dissatisfaction, especially on the part of those participants who came from the localities. We did not give them a chance to have their say, and that would have been useful, but two days are not long enough. Otherwise the agenda adopted by the congress at the very beginning would not have been completed.

[Tarasov] Immediately after the congress, I asked Yu. Afanasyev whether he considered that the congress will give fresh impetus to the movement. His answer was that the prospects for further development lay not in the fact of the congress itself but in the decisions adopted. Which of them would you highlight as being most topical?

[Ponomarev] It is very important that the congress supported the economic reform now being implemented by the Russian president and the government. Democratic Russia advocates the creation of a Committee of Russian Reforms. I would stress in particular the absence of the words "for the support" after the word "committee." The fact is that when implementing the reform together with the government we are ready at all times to put forward amendments to its program. To that end we are forming a parallel cabinet of economists, lawyers, and other specialists. That is genuine support, if you take into account that via public committees at local level our Movement, as the biggest mass movement, will have a real opportunity to constantly gauge the temperature of social tension in the regions.

Surely a no less urgent task is that of implementing at local level those laws already adopted by the Russian parliament. I stress in particular that the majority of them were prepared by deputies belonging to the "Democratic Russia" parliamentary bloc. The fate not only of our Movement but of all Russia depends on how successfully we cope with that.

Travkin Addresses DPR Congress

PM1212141991 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 10 Dec 91 p 4

[Unattributed report highlighting extracts from N. Travkin's report to Democratic Party of Russia congress under general headline: "Backing the Union"]

[Text] The Third Congress of the Democratic Party of Russia [DPR], which was held in Moscow 7-8 December, furnishes much food for thought about the prospects of the development of the political situation in the country. It demonstrated that differences and even a split in the democratic camp stem not from the personal differences or ambitions of individual leaders, but from fundamentally different approaches to vital problems of Russia and the Union.

These problems are at present looming large before the country's citizens, and a great deal, if not everything, will depend on the choice they make. Those who want to make this choice consciously, will find it useful to acquaint themselves with some of the ideas contained in the report of Nikolay Travkin, chairman of the DPR, printed here.

Ethnic conflicts are no longer resolved by diplomatic, political methods. There is increasingly frequent recourse to the threat—or the actual use—of arms. People and families cannot live for long in an atmosphere of hostility and sometimes even of direct threats.

It may happen that the tens of millions of refugees of Russian extraction will involuntarily spark the explosion which will initiate a tragedy incomparable with anything our society has experienced. The assurances of certain politicians to the effect that mutual bilateral treaties will safeguard the rights of the nonindigenous population will come to nothing. It is enough to take a look at the Baltic republics, which deem themselves civilized.

When people voted for independence at referenda, they did not bargain for the disruption of economic and human relations. They believed in the common sense of their presidents, and until the main cause of the current situation—the collapse of the Union—is removed, we will be heading for a catastrophe.

Another cause of the deterioration of the situation can be described with the word "unpredictability." This applies to the actions of the authorities. In general, it seems to me, this unpredictability stems from the lack of a clear-cut program, and no matter how paradoxical this may seem, it is very convenient for the authorities. That way they are not subject to control. If something comes off, well and good. If it does not, they can say: It was never our intention.

There is also a third, purely political reason for the situation which has taken shape since the putsch. This is the absence of a strong, constructive opposition. The authorities fear no one. They have no competition. Therefore a rapid self-propagation of the new stratum of the young bureaucracy is under way. It no longer fits within the old walls and has quickly filled up all the premises in the numerous buildings of the former CPSU Central Committee and swallowed up the garage of the party nomenklatura with room for 700 Volgas. If there is no opposition, everything will repeat itself from the beginning.

Today the political forces in Russia can theoretically be divided into three groups, according to their attitude toward the market and statehood.

The first group advocates building a normal market economy but without the Union and allowing for a division of Russia. The paradox is that the forces which profess this approach belong to the bloc known as "Democratic Russia." They are acting like Iydushka Golovlev when he said to his dying father: "You just lie there and lie there, dad. If you got up, you could run like a rabbit."

The second group favors the preservation of the Union and a united Russia but with a socialist economy without a market.

The third group advocates a radical restructuring of the economy, a market, and simultaneously the building of a mutually advantagepus Union and the preservation of a united Russia.

Of the two former extreme groupings of political forces, the most destructive influence on the situation today is exerted by the first one. It is this group which has engendered and is nurturing the root cause of our troubles—the destruction of statehood following the collapse of communism.

Poll on Government Improving Living Standards

OW1312074291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0707 GMT 13 Dec 91

[From the "Viewpoint" column; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Boris Yeltsin's government cannot improve living standards in the republic, said 44% of the 1473 Russian residents polled by the National Public Opinion Studies Centre last November, says news agency DATA.

Nearly an equal number of respondents (41%) would not say whether they had confidence in their government.

15% were confident that the new cabinet of ministers would succeed.

Margin of error: 3%.

Decree Gives Definition of 'Commercial Secret'

OW1312035591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2034 GMT 12 Dec 91

[From the 13 December "Soviet Business Report"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On December 5, Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed government decree No. 35 entitled "On the types of information which may be held as commercial secret."

The decree stipulates that enterprises or entrepreneurs cannot hold the following types of information as commercial secret: the chosen form of bookkeeping used for all financial and economic activities; an enterprise's founding documents and regulations; and, information concerning the participation of an enterprise's officials in cooperatives, small enterprises, partnerships, joint-stock companies, associations and other organizations which engage in business activites.

In addition, state and municipal enterprises in the pre-privatization or privatization stages are required to disclose data on the size of their property and the value of their financial assets.

Zhirinovskiy Press Conference Reported

PM1312105391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 6 Dec 91 Union Edition p 3

[Nikolay Andreyev report: "Political Diary: Zhirinovskiy Bides His Time"]

[Text] In June this year at a meeting in Perm with V. Zhirinovskiy (at that time he was rampaging around the country in the election race for the Russian presidential post), a circus artiste delivered an address and spoke in praise of the contender "from the point of view of my own profession." A typical feeling about the Zhirinovskiy of that period is that he was a clown. His exotic conduct, his virtuoso turn of phrase, his shameless bragging—these and many other shock tactics for conducting the election battle actually created an image more reminiscent of a circus ring than a political arena.

Let us come up to date. There is a demonstration going on in Khabarovsk. The main demand is for Zhirinovskiy to be made head of the kray authorities. Admittedly, it is reported that the demonstration was small and that it comprised the so-called "declassed" elements, but the fact remains: Zhirinovskiy has not left the political stage like the other unlucky contenders. What is more, it seems that he is steadily scoring political points.

I happened to be at one of Zhirinovskiy's press conferences recently. It must be noted that it was staged quite ingeniously. It was held in a cinema which was crammed with the general public who had come to see a film. But instead, the people were offered a meeting with Zhirinovskiy: How could they refuse?

The auditorium's reaction to Zhirinovskiy's speech was striking: Every sentence was greeted with applause and approving shouts. When one correspondent asked a question which Zhirinovskiy did not really like, there were resounding cries of: "Down with the provocateur!" Once again, I am at pains to stress that the auditorium was filled with the general public—people who just happened to be in that place at that time. They were seeing Zhirinovskiy for the first time, they were hearing him speak for the first time, and there was near-unanimous approval of his position. So what is behind this? The reason, as it seems to me, lies in Zhirinovskiy's ability to find an attractive, comprehensible, specific target for each of us. For the poor and the wretched, he will shake up the rich; for the rich he offers a secure life; for the workers, he offers protection from the exploitative bourgeoisie; for the starving, he offers bread; for the pensioners, he offers a peaceful old age; and for everyone, he offers Cuba, which he promises to transform into an island resort for Soviet people.

Zhirinovskiy is the Kashpirovskiy of social and economic ills. He promises that the remedy will bring radical and speedy results. His favorite time schedule is 72 hours. Order and legality will emerge within 72 hours of his coming to power. Sheremetyevo will close for 72 hours in order to investigate the "fat cats." Within 72 hours of his becoming president, everyone will be fed, clothed, and shod, and they will throw themselves at each other in fraternal embraces. An how the auditorium lit up when he promised to start building prisons which are comfortable, clean, warm, and with real home cooking.

Zhirinovskiy is playing a game of contrast. You have only to turn on your television or open your newspaper to see that there is a competition going on to see who can frighten people the most with talk of famine, cold, unemployment, and prices. You listen and you read—and you have no wish to go on living. But Zhirinovskiy radiates confidence and optimism, and after some resistance this confidence, optimism, and hope grips the hall, and all hearts open up to welcome the orator. Even those who until recently believed in nobody and nothing are suddenly waking up: then what? Supposing this really is the savior of the Fatherland? Zhirinovskiy continues to raise hopes: We will feed the country—there is fish in Murmansk; there is bread in Ukraine; there is fruit in Georgia; there is sugar in Cuba; and Zhirinovskiy himself saw meat at a market in Volgograd—it only has to be brought in.

Delay Over Military Conversion Viewed

PM1312103391 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 6 Dec 91 p 1

[Article by S. Razin: "The Military-Industrial Complex Has Tough Armor. Why Is Russia in No Hurry To Convert?"]

[Text] It is difficult to be an optimist these days. If only because conversion has not even gotten off the ground, and the Soviet military-industrial complex comprises 1,100 enterprises and 7 million people—a giant consuming nearly 300 billion rubles [R] per year.

It could not have been otherwise. The conversion task was entrusted to the USSR Council of Ministers Military-Industrial Commission, which the Politburo was bleeding dry, for the creation of new types of weapons—the wolf tending the lamb. What now? Now the military-industrial complex's cover is blown: no Central Committee, no Council of Ministers, no State Planning Committee, and even the ministries have been dispersed. Finances, gold, oil have transferred from the center to Russia. "Let us trade in arms," Yeltsin said recently. We were promised $3.5 million for each tank. So trade could be brisk: Our state has 4.5 times as many tanks as America, five times as many armored personnel carriers, and nine times as many artillery pieces. This kind of "conversion" is hardly likely to delight the "big seven." Yeltsin could well be accused of taking over the "pirates' flag" from the putschists, who raised exports of Soviet armaments to 28 percent of the world total. Military deals reached a total of $20 billion.

It is time we zeroed in on the chief aim of conversion. The Pentagon, for example, places defense orders with private firms, which have contrived to derive even from the SDI project a mass of technologies that are useful for the consumer market. What does the "reform cabinet" think about this?

"One thing I will say: Defense expenditure is being drastically cut, particularly expenditure on the purchase of armaments. I am not going to frighten you with figures at this time," Yegor Gaydar explained at a press conference. That is all one could get out of the vice premier. Twice he chose to ignore questions about a blueprint. There is nothing about it either in the package of presidential decrees on conversion. Is that not why the Russian president was forced to come across as a broker during the official visit to Germany? Yeltsin came to a personal agreement with the Daimler-Benz concern to the effect that the firm would take a share in St. Petersburg and Nizhniy Tagil defense plants and organize the production of farm equipment for us. Thanks are due to Boris Nikolayevich, of course.

The vice president was placed in charge of conversion. An RSFSR State Committee for Conversion was set up, headed by M. Bazhanov, who is also a former pilot.

At the first session of the "reform cabinet" A. Rutskoy demanded that the defense sector be transferred "to the jurisdiction" of the new state committee. Industry Minister A. Titkin objected, and a compromise was reached: Now the military-industrial complex has two chiefs. One is in charge of conversion, the other directs operations. Will the dyarchy last for long?

"Enough of this experimenting with the people!"—that was the leitmotiv of General of Aviation Rutskoy's tour of Siberia. He gave short shrift to the package of radical reforms, particularly the liberalization of prices, and advocated the revival of the state order. The audience, including many military-industrial complex directors, appreciated the vice president's stance. Freedom, apparently, is not to everyone's taste.

"Doesn't it seem to you that the 'military-industrial complex diehards' were again using General Rutskoy as a mouthpiece?" The question was put at the press conference given by A. Golovkov, economic adviser to G. Burbulis.

"I have heard the hypothesis. I cannot prove it, but I certainly do not rule it out," A. Golovkov replied.

To all appearances, a new alliance of political forces is emerging. Half the military-industrial complex directors are hankering after the old injections of finance, experts believe. One month ago they wrote a letter to Yeltsin demanding that he leave the defense ministries be; now they have evidently decided to back the vice president and the new state committee. More comfortable that way. Although there is an alternative option.

I am thinking of the International Conversion Fund [ICF], set up in Moscow a year ago. Its work is based on the blueprint proposed by leading Soviet and foreign experts. I would like to pick out just two simple principles: profit instead of expenditure, and the ruble is good but the dollar is better. As is well known, the generals wanted to strip the treasury of R50 billion for conversion. But the ICF is not demanding a single kopek from the budget. Moreover, overseas capital is being sought for the "readjustment" of the military-industrial complex.

You can ask the "Istok" association, in Moscow Oblast, whether this practice works. A year ago the firm was almost bankrupt, but the conversion fund stepped in with a hard currency order.

Our country is beginning to produce unique hearing aids that can cure even those who have been deaf from birth. The new aid was invented by the Italian Maico firm and it was happy to collaborate with a strong Soviet enterprise.

The fund has also seen other situations where the ideas have come from us and the machine tools and currency have come from the West. The well known Olivetti firm, for example, struck up a partnership with one of the enterprises of the former Ministry of Medium Machine Building. We have our "pearls"! If you treat furniture or parquet floors with a monomer used in missile construction, then birch becomes stronger and more valuable than oak. This know-how poses the threat of yet another Russian revolution—a technological one.

The International Conversion Fund has around 150 military-industrial complex enterprises in its orbit. Fund branches have been opened in 24 cities here and abroad: in the United States, Austria, Italy, Argentina, Bulgaria. Extensive ties like these make it possible to constantly update very valuable databases: hard currency orders, vacant capacities, technological breakthroughs.

The fund has now entered a new phase. It used to help individual plants to clamber out of the pit of debt, now it is targeting entire conversion regions—Udmurtia, Siberia, St. Petersburg, the Urals. The fund intends to present the first five of these programs to the Russian Government. Will they be implemented?

Doubts remain. Unfortunately, large-scale ICF projects have withered on the vine so far. The conversion fund tried to bring its projects to the notice of Premier Pavlov—no dice. Then it switched to the Silayev cabinet. Now it is writing to Vice President Rutskoy. Meanwhile...

But it is not a question of personalities. All over the world politicians are carrying out reforms with the backing of business circles. This view is championed in the Kremlin, incidentally: An Entrepreneurs Council was set up under M. Gorbachev, I. Silayev personally took charge of a congress of business circles, and A. Volskiy is still head of the Scientific-Industrial Union, which brings together the same defense plants under the banner of Western investments. What will Gaydar's team have to show for itself?

Russia is a cornucopia. Strong commercial structures have sprouted even on the armor of the military-industrial complex. They could be strengthened by the "reform cabinet." One only has to find the optimum collaboration model. So new hopes are pinned again on Staraya Square, where the Russian Government is now operating.

International Affairs

Honecker To Be Deported to FRG 13 Dec

PM1112190991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 12 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Untitled report in the IZVESTIYA, TASS, INTERFAX, RIA, REUTER roundup]

[Text] In the evening of 10 December, as your IZVESTIYA correspondent found out from authoritative sources, Erich Honecker was informed of the Russian Government's decision that he must leave the republic's territory.

The former head of the GDR was instructed to leave the RSFSR no later than 13 December and it was made clear to him that in the event of refusal, he would be forcibly deported at the prescribed time from the RSFSR to the FRG. Erich Honecker has protested this, pointing out inter alia that he had asked the Soviet Government to grant him political asylum.

Says He Was 'Politically Persecuted'

LD1212131591 Berlin ADN in German 1226 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] Hamburg/Moscow (ADN)—Erich Honecker, the former GDR head of state, has had a statement distributed in front of the Chilean Embassy in Moscow today. According to BILD, which published a text containing seven points, Honecker states: "on the suggestion of extradition," that such a step was against international law. The statement, signed "Erich Honecker," further says that "the reason for the attempts of the Government of the Federal Republic to bring the former chairman of the GDR Council of State and National Defense Council to court is the political intention to get even with the representatives of the 'GDR regime of injustice.' Criminal proceedings through an FRG court against a head of state for constitutional acts while carrying out his office is a violation of international law."

Honecker says he had asked the Soviet Government for asylum because he was being "politically persecuted." Proof of this was "obvious. Political criminal proceedings exclude the possibility of extradition."

Honecker also speaks against "the assertion" that the Soviet Union had violated "FRG sovereignty through his transfer to Moscow, which had been necessitated by illness." This was not true. "The sovereignty of the FRG has, in this sense, only been in existence since the exchange of the documents of ratification of the 'Two Plus Four' treaty," Honecker says. In addition he had agreed to his transfer to the Soviet Union.

Honecker says further that there was no extradition treaty between the Soviet Union and the FRG, nor between Russia and the FRG. "Consequently, the local government has no cause to agree to such a request, let alone meet one, because those being politically persecuted cannot be extradited, in accordance with international law." In addition it was "international law that a person may only be extradited to another state if the offense of which he is accused is also legally punishable in the state demanding the extradition."

'Guest' of Chilean Envoy in Moscow

LD1212183191 Moscow TASS in English 1429 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Viktor Runov]

[Text] Moscow December 12 (TASS)—Former East German leader Erich Honecker is staying in the residence of Chilean ambassador to the USSR "as a guest", the embassy sources told TASS by telephone today. Earlier the embassy told TASS they have no information on Honecker's whereabouts.

Bonn's Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday [11 December] that Chile had told German authorities the fugitive leader had taken refuge in Chile's embassy in Moscow after the Russian Government asked him to return home to Germany before Friday.

Khasbulatov Visits ROK, Meets No Tae-u

LD1112073291 Moscow TASS in English 1804 GMT 10 Dec 91

[By TASS special correspondents Ivan Zakharchenko and Vladimir Kuchko]

[Text] Seoul December 10 TASS—South Korean President No Tae-u met on Tuesday [10 December] with a delegation of Russian parliamentarians headed by parliamentary speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov to discuss prospects for bilateral relations between South Korea and Russia.

The delegation is in Seoul on an official visit.

No Tae-u stressed Seoul is looking forward to meeting Russian President Boris Yeltsin who is expected to visit South Korea next summer.

The South Korean president reiterated his country will grant the Soviet Union three billion U.S. dollars in financial and economic aid. The Soviet Union has already received 1.8 billion U.S. dollars, while the rest will be allocated after a session of South Korean ministers of foreign affairs, finance, trade and industry next Wednesday. The funds will be used to buy South Korean consumer goods and factory equipment.

The ministers will also discuss other issues concerning the current situation in the Soviet Union, the South Korean news agency YONHAP said.

Discussing the situation in the Korean peninsula, both parties stressed the need to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region. Commenting on North Korea's plans to begin the production of nuclear weapons in the near future, Khasbulatov said Russia insists on strict international control over nuclear programmes.

The Russian parliamentarians will end the visit to Seoul on Wednesday [11 December].

Comments Upon Return

SK1312064791 Moscow Radio Moscow in Korean 1100 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Interview with Russian Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov in Moscow; date not given—from the "Focus on Asia" program]

[Text] The Russian Supreme Soviet delegation has concluded its visit to the ROK. Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, headed the delegation.

In an interview upon his return to Moscow, he answered questions from Soviet and foreign reporters.

[Begin Khasbulatov recording in Russian fading into Korean translation] The main objective behind our visit to the ROK this time was to prevent nuclear weapons proliferation on the Korean peninsula. The Russian Government recently made its stand clear on this issue.

Our visit to the ROK allowed us to become acquainted with the situation and to exchange opinions with ROK lawmakers.

In the process of our talks in Seoul, we told our ROK colleagues how very seriously we view the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

Russia plans to faithfully fulfill all duties stipulated in the treaties signed by the Soviet Union. In other words, Russia will succeed the Soviet Union in guaranteeing the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of the Nuclear Weapons concluded in 1968. Russia will do its utmost to keep these deadly lethal weapons from spreading. This applies to the Korean peninsula.

Pyongyang should be aware of this.

Shortly before our departure from Seoul, we were informed that the U.S. nuclear weapons had been completely withdrawn from the ROK.

This was a very important piece of news. For this reason, Pyongyang no longer has any excuse to refuse international inspection of its nuclear facilities.

On more than one occasion, the ROK has stated that it will give necessary guarantees for its own nonnuclear stand. Losing this opportunity, the first ever offered since the appearance of the possibility of turning the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-free zone, can only be seen as a criminal act. [end recording]

Parliamentary Group Received by China's Wan Li

LD1312060591 Moscow TASS in English 2217 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondents Vladimir Oreshin and Vladimir Fedoruk]

[Text] Beijing December 12 TASS—Vladimir Lukin, the leader of a visiting Russian parliamentary delegation, delivered a personal message from Russian parliament chief Ruslan Khasbulatov to Wan Li, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, here on Thursday [12 December].

The message, Lukin said, conveys Russia's desire to develop contacts between the top legislative bodies of the two countries and raise the level of contacts and invites the Chinese parliament chief to visit Russia.

Relations between China and Russia underwent large-scale development in recent years, Wan Li told the Russian delegation.

He expressed a wish for the speediest achievement of political stability, economic recovery and progress in the Russian Federation.

China wishes to live in friendship with all countries, maintaining relations with them on the principels of peaceful coexistence. Contacts with such a big neighbour as Russia are of special importance to China, Wan Li emphasised.

On the same day the Russian parliamentarians had a meeting in the Chinese state committee for the reorganisation of the economic management system, discussing matters aimed at setting up a joint Sino-Russian economic commission.

Parliamentarians End Visit

LD1312140691 Moscow TASS in English 1317 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondents Vladimir Oreshin and Vladimir Fedoruk]

[Text] Beijing December 13 TASS—The visit to China of a Russian parliamentary delegation, which ended here today, was an important landmark in relations between the two countries.

"Political developments in our country have shown the timeliness of our current visit, the purpose of which was not to lose pace in further promoting relations with China," leader of the Russian delegation, chairman of the parliamentary committee for international affairs and foreign economic relations Vladimir Lukin told TASS before leaving for home.

According to Lukin, China ranks among the key priorities of Russian foreign policy. At present China is also interested in promoting its development. Hence, it needs stable, friendly relations with the neighbouring countries, including Russia. This creates favourable conditions for developing our relations on the basis of the progress made in recent years. The chance must not be missed. No wrong steps are permissible," [no opening quotation marks as received] Lukin stressed.

"We would like Russian-Chinese relations to remain unaffected by internal political fluctuations. As noted in President Yeltsin's message to the Chinese leadership, Russia wants to remove ideology from its foreign policy," Lukin noted. "The history of our relations," he added, "shows that excessive ideologization is not" to the benefit of the peoples of our two countries.

In the course of the visit, the sides have mapped out ways to further promote the dialogue between Russia and China. A visit to China by Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev was scheduled for next year. A Chinese parliamentary delegation is expected to pay a reply visit to Russia next summer. It is on the order of the day to set up a joint Russian-Chinese economic comission to promote the development of bilateral commercial-economic relations between the two countries, which have somewhat declined lately.

The Russian parliamentary delegation, which stayed in China from December 6, was received by head of the Chinese parliament Wan Li, vice-premier of the PRC State Council Wu Xueqian. It had meetings and talks with officials of the Foreign Ministry and Ministry for Economic Relations and Foreign Trade. In addition to Beijing, the Russian parliament members also visit Guangzhou and the special economic zone of Shenzhen, where they studied the Chinese experience in reforming the economy and expanding foreign relations.

Burbulis Visits France, Meets With Mitterrand

LD1312002591 Moscow TASS in English 2241 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondents Sergey Batyrev and Igor Kuleshov]

[Text] Paris December 13 TASS—Gennadiy Burbulis, state secretary of the Russian Federation and first deputy chairman of the Russian Government, on a brief visit here was received by French President Francois Mitterrand Thursday evening [12 December].

"The French president fully accepts the transformations and novelties taking place in Russia," Burbulis said after the meeting at the Elysee Palace, commenting to TASS on conversation with the French president.

He said the French leaders had expressed the readiness to support reforms in Russia and said that President Yeltsin's visit to France planned for late January was regarded as an important milestone in Russo-French relations lasting over many centuries.

"We expressed the mutual confidence that the visit is to culminate in the signing of fundamental documents. During the meeting I handed over to President Mitterrand a message from President Yeltsin," Burbulis said.

"The French president was optimistic about the Minsk agreement and constructive transformations associated with it. He said that France and its leaders are aware of the problems encountered by Russia and will do their utmost to promote their solution in a most crusial period, in the forthcoming winter months. Specific assistance to Russia in economic reforms is planned," Burbulis said.

"I am absolutely pleased with the meeting," Burbulis said. "I am looking forward to serious, important results. We believe that a new chapter is opened in relations between France and Russia which have always been extremely important."

Asked if political future of the USSR president was discussed during the conversation, Burbulis said: "It was wise of the French president to emphasise his invariable high respect for the activity of President Gorbachev, but not more than that."

Asked if the Russian president intends to follow the example of the Ukrainian leader who proclaimed himself commander in chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, Burbulis said that this would depend on the concept Russia adopts. At present it favours the approach formulated in Article Six of the agreement signed in Minsk—the creation of a common military-strategic space in the framework of independent states with ensuring single control over nuclear arms.

Comments on Results of Visit

LD1212233891 Moscow TASS in English 2259 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondents Sergey Batyrev and Igor Kuleshov]

[Text] Paris December 13 TASS—The short-term French visit of Gennadiy Burbulis, state secretary and first deputy chairman of the Russian Government, appeared to be very intensive.

He spent only one day in Paris and managed to meet dozens of French statesmen, politicians, representatives of the French business community and mass media, and staffers of the Soviet institutions in Paris.

The day, which began early in the morning with meeting correspondents from the TF1 television company, had its culmination in the evening, when Burbulis was received by French President Francois Mitterrand.

The major task of the visit has been fulfilled, Burbulis told TASS at the Orly Airport. The French leadership was presented the necessary reasoning on the recent events in the Russian Federation and the new Commonwealth of Independent States. In his turn, Burbulis received a complete understanding of the French leadership's major concerns in connection with the prospects for interaction.

Passing to the French president a message of the Russian president, we stressed once again that we consider a matter of principle the Russian-French concord within the framework of the European Community, the restoration of historical relations between Russia and France, and the formation of new prospects for bilateral cooperation, Burbulis said.

The meetings focused on many specific issues of economic cooperation, both for the near future and for longer terms.

Aspects of the upcoming French visit of Russian President Yeltsin, to take place late in January-early in February, 1992, have also been discussed.

Burbulis hopes, and the French side, including President Mitterrand, has confirmed it, that the visit may result in signing of fundamental documents to establish the outlines and the concept of long-term cooperation between Russia and France as fully-fledged states within the framework of the European and world communities.

Burbulis said he is satisfied with the meetings and talks, and thinks the French visit has proved its value.

Upon the completion of his French visit, the Russian first vice-premier left for Brussels to hold negotiations with Chairman of the European Communities' Commission Jacques Delors.

St Petersburg Mayor in Paris for Food Aid

924A0287C Moscow TRUD in Russian 5 Dec 91 p 3

[Article by TRUD correspondent V. Prokofyev: "Paris Will Aid St. Petersburg"]

[Text] Paris, 4 December—Anatoliy Sobchak, mayor of St. Petersburg, has completed a visit to Paris on the occasion of his receiving the "Memorial Prize" awarded to those who make the greatest contribution to the restoration and preservation of peoples' historical monuments.

Awards aside, the main reason A. Sobchak came to Paris, as became clear in his meeting with journalists, was something else—to get an agreement from the French on food aid, or rather, that part of it earmarked for St. Petersburg. He acknowledged that the situation is extremely difficult with many food products, and that there remains only several days worth in the city.

"I turned over a list of the foods that the city needs, and I laid out the specific system for their acceptance and transportation, which we are taking on ourselves," declared A. Sobchak. "I hope that the first food shipments will begin to arrive in a couple of weeks."

In response to the question why the talk in Paris was only about St. Petersburg, he answered:

"It is important that there is a valid and specific address, so that there are no leakages or violations. We started to work on preparations sooner, and now we are ready to receive help. We cannot wait until the Russian leadership, or what remains of the Union leadership, begin real work."

A. Sobchak also expressed criticism with respect to Western leaders. Instead of general talks on readiness to assist Russia, he declared, a real operating mechanism for providing assistance is needed.

The mayor of St. Petersburg reported on his meeting with the president of the International Food Bank and also about the establishment in his city, with the help of this organization, of a network of dining halls and free food centers where socially unprotected citizens will be served first and foremost, and, afterward, anyone else who wants it. It is planned to open the first food center on 15 December.

Visits Sweden, Secures Aid

PM1012162491 Stockholm DAGENS NYHETER in Swedish 5 Dec 91 p A12

[Disa Hastad report: "'Demand an Agreement on Nuclear Arms'"]

[Excerpt] "The world must demand that an agreement guaranteeing central control over the Soviet Union's nuclear arms be signed—by the republics which have them in their possession—whether this is achieved through the proposed union treaty or in some other way.

"This is the most important thing," St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak stressed. Sobchak paid a lightning visit to Stockholm yesterday to take part in a economics seminar on St. Petersburg arranged by the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce. Sobchak also met with Prime Minister Carl Bildt, who promised St. Petersburg food worth 15 million kronor to see it through the winter. [passage omitted]

Holds Press Conference in Finland

LD1012195691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1708 GMT 10 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Surikov]

[Text] Helsinki, 10 Dec (TASS)—A hail of questions relating to the development of the political situation in the former Soviet Union descended today on Anatoliy Sobchak, mayor of St. Petersburg, who spoke at a press conference in Helsinki at the end of his two-day visit to Finland.

To a question as to whether he believes the outcome of the meeting in Minsk to be a coup d'etat, Sobchak replied categorically in the negative, stressing that the legally elected leaders of three republics had made a decision within the limits of their competence. Now, he added, a process of putting this decision into practice should follow—approval by the republics' parliaments and the drawing up of documents that would secure this new Commonwealth juridically. So far, we have a keynote political statement in which there are no clear juridical outlines of what is to be created. History has known various forms of state formations and interstate ties. So far, I do not know what the authors of the statement signed in Minsk had in mind, a confederation or an interstate formation along the lines of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The statement does not make clear the main thing: which matters the republics are willing to tackle jointly, whether they are setting up any joint leadership bodies, or whether all this has been undertaken with the single aim of getting rid of the previous Union authorities and President Gorbachev?

At the same time, the mayor of St. Petersburg and member of the USSR President's Political Consultative Council noted, the present situation is indeed such that the preservation of the former structures of Union power is becoming altogether questionable. The Union was formed by the republics. If they have all declared their independence and expressed their desire to build their relations with each other in some other way, then whether we like it or not, that is a matter for the republics themselves.

Having noted the danger of the present situation, Sobchak added that he does not for the present see the possibility of a seizure of power by the military, though such a turn of events should not be completely ruled out. This, he stressed, would bring nothing good to the country.

The head of the St. Petersburg city administration acknowleged that there are grounds for the alarm now being expressed about who is to exercise control over the Soviet nuclear arsenal and how. He stated: I am in favor of the world community demanding that all our republics urgently draw up an accord on the inadmissability of dispersing control over nuclear weapons.

Having touched on the problem of food supplies to St. Petersburg, he called the present situation very complex. We are worried most about the main question of how people will live and how we will feed them, lest it should fall into oblivion, obscured by all these unions and commonwealths. We are now talking about people's survival. If republican leaders had thought more of their own peoples and the needs of individuals, they would have had to stop their political disputes, to reach accords, and to tackle the task of ensuring that normal conditions of life have been provided for everyone. This is the main thing and it is on this that our country's future depends. In the face of that, everything else—declarations of independence and sovereignty, personal and nationalist ambitions, all of this is of no significance whatsoever. The mayor positively appraised the results of the meetings which took place during the visit with Finnish officials and representatives of the world of business. In his words, it was not just an exchange of views but a discussion of specific cooperation projects. The Finnish side showed enormous interest in developing partner-like ties with St. Petersburg and Russia. At all the meetings our positions coincided and we always arrived at a view that was shared. Just like Finland's representatives, I too believe that the current decline in trade and economic relations between our countries is not a normal affair. Everything possible must be done to restore the previous volume of trade. I was often asked here the same question: "Who can we now deal with in your country? Who is responsible for what?" I always said in reply: "Deal with St. Petersburg. We have a robust administration, its duties are clearly demarcated, and it has enough power at its disposal."

Regional Affairs

Dudayev Decree on Subordinating Armed Groups

LD1112192191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1435 GMT 11 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Sharip Asuyev]

[Text] Groznyy, 11 December (TASS)—Dzhakhar Dudayev, president of the Chechen Republic, has signed a decree under which all armed groupings on the territory of the republic are subordinated to its president.

A staff of the Armed Forces is being set up to command subunits of the regular army and units of the people's militia. It has also been decided to fix the establishment salary scales for personnel of the national guard, which is being invested with the rights of a legal person. It is planned to design and prepare a uniform for the guardsmen before 15 January.

The president of the Chechen Republic, who is a reserve general, is seeking to concern himself not only with the Armed Forces. In another of his decrees he has decided to take all cultural and artistic bodies under state protection and to prohibit their privatization, "with the aim of preserving the material base of the republic's culture and art."

Regions Not Honoring Food Contracts With Moscow

LD1112150391 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 0800 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Text] The food situation in the capital is grave. There is only a few days' supply of meat, animal and vegetable fats, and sugar. In such circumstances, compliance with contracts for 1991-92 is paramount, but as practice shows, far from all regions are honoring these contracts.

Orel: Although the oblast's agricultural workers are trying to meet their contractual obligations to Moscow, unfortunately, there are major disruptions. A TASS correspondent has been told that 10 percent of the plan for milk deliveries for the last months of the year has so far been met. The plan is 8,300 tonnes; not much more than 366 tonnes of milk have been despatched to Moscow.

Vladimir: Nobody can remember such a depressing emptiness in the oblast bakeries directorate's warehouses. In almost all towns and rayon centers, workers' settlements and villages, strict limits on bread sales or ration cards have been introduced. Dairy produce is in especially short supply. Over the year, Vladimir Oblast farms should have sent 5,500 tonnes of milk to Moscow, but so far have managed 3,700 tonnes. Services to Moscow by milk tankers have been temporarily suspended.

Alma-Ata: Despite the fact that the food situation in the republic is difficult, because of the drought, here they will honor their contractual obligations. As they are supposed to this year, they will send to Moscow just under 4,000 tonnes of meat. This was reported to a TASS correspondent by Valentin Dvurechenskiy, the Kazakhstan minister for agriculture and food. Already despatched are 2,400 tonnes of meat; the rest will be soon be sent.

Moscow Mayor on Privatization Decision

PM1212132591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 7 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Untitled report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, RIA, and INTERFAX column]

[Text] The decision by the Lesser Soviet (Moscow City Duma) to revoke the mayor's order on the privatization of municipal trade, everyday service, and public catering enterprises is invalid, Mayor Gavriil Popov, said at a press conference. "Unlike the Moscow City Soviet the Lesser Soviet does not have the constitutional rights to revoke the mayor's orders."

Calls for Immediate Privatization

LD1212220791 Moscow TASS in English 1200 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 12 TASS—Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov said Thursday [12 December] the [words indistinct] command system of management through bureaucratic structures still exists and total privatisation and market reforms have not even been started yet.

In an interview with the Soviet trade union daily TRUD, Popov described the current situation in the country as "paradox in which democrats are being forced to create a new command system, which violates their principles and discredits them. However, this is the only way to achieve the goal, but many [words indistinct] not recognise this contradiction exists," Popov said.

He called for faster market reforms to avoid a return of the command and bureaucratic system under democratic banners. He stressed large-scale privatisation is the first and the most vital step in this direction and it should be taken immediately.

He believes the liberalisation of prices scheduled for January 2, 1992 should also be preceded by structural reforms in the economy and agriculture.

Moscow Presidium Decision on Military Units

LD1212222391 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] The Presidium of Moscow oblast soviet has adopted a decision binding the command of Moscow Military District, Anti- Aircraft Defense District, and troops of the Interior Ministry to inform Moscow oblast soviet and the head of the administration in Moscow oblast about the movement of the subunits and units subordinate to them. This is reported by (Andrey Polyakov), chairman of the oblast soviet, in an interview to RIA. The situation on 19 August when tanks of the Taman division appeared in Moscow should not be repeated.

Novgorod Nuclear Station's Future Resolved

LD1312122791 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Text] The fate of the Nizhniy Novgorod nuclear heat-supply station has finally been resolved, following eight years of construction and five years of public controversy. The plant, which is almost ready for use and has been given a clean bill of health by independent experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA], will be converted to a gas-fired heat-supply station. This has been decided by both local and Russian authorities. About 250 million rubles have already been invested in the construction of this highly complex engineering project.

UN Rejects St Petersburg Free Economic Zone

OW1312010491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2034 GMT 12 Dec 91

[From the 13 December "Soviet Business Report" feature—transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Experts from the UN Multinational Corporations Committee turned down a plan put forward by the Mayor's Office in St. Petersburg for a free enterprise zone as "unpromising and unpragmatic".

Tatar President Supports Nonethnic Commonwealth

LD1112171591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1203 GMT 11 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Nikolay Sorokin]

[Text] Kazan, 11 Dec (TASS)—The use of a commonwealth in the current situation is a possible way to preserve the Union, Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaymiyev said in an interview with a TASS correspondent. However, it should not be formed along ethnic or religious lines.

In the view of the president, two unions—Islamic and Slav—are impermissible. This will inevitably lead to confrontation both in the Union and, possibly, will destabilize the situation in Tatarstan. "I imagine," the president said, "that if the commonwealth is formed, all former Union republics, sovereign states, will join it." He did not rule out the possibility that Tatarstan may join the commonwealth. The first attempt on the part of Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus has already been made. "We have no other path other than association. Not a single state of the former Union will get out of the crisis in isolation," Mintimer Shaymiyev stressed.

Economic Agreement Reached With Tatarstan

PM1212101791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 10 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Alyans Sabirov report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Russia-Tatarstan: Way to Accord"]

[Text] Kazan—The RSFSR Government has signed an economic cooperation agremeent with the Tatar SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] Government.

The 15 months of talks that began following the proclamation of Tatar state sovereignty are over. Dozens of specialists on both sides took part in this work. Although there were sharp disputes until the last minute, the two republics' delegations succeeded in drafting the final version of the document, which was signed by Russian Vice Premier Ye. Gaydar and Tatar Prime Minister M. Sabirov.

A fundamental question concerns the property that is to be transferred to the jurisdiction of the former autonomous formation. The agreement also makes provision for joint interrepublic ownership. Tatarstan will set a state order for oil extraction and refining. It has been agreed that the republic on the Volga autonomously exercises its right to foreign economic activity, including exports of "black gold." It is also envisaged that the Tatar SSR will take part in servicing the country's foreign debt.

The economic agreement will be the basis of a treaty between Russia and Tatarstan within the framework of the new Union—a treaty that it is intended that Presidents B. Yeltsin and M. Shaymiyev will sign.

Belarus

Supreme Soviet Briefed on Commonwealth

PM1212181091 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 11 Dec 91 p 2

[TASS report: "...And Lenin Was Carried Out"]

[Text] Minsk—After a recess lasting almost a month, the Belarussian Republic Supreme Soviet session has resumed its work.

Stanislav Shushkevich, the head of the parliament, briefed deputies on his meeting with the leaders of Russia and Ukraine, and commented briefly on the documents they signed. According to him, the center's shortsighted policy has resulted in a political and economic crisis. This could not go on, and therefore the leaders of the three republics elaborated their concept for a way out of the prevailing situation.

The chairman of the Belarussian Supreme Soviet explained his absence from the State Council session by saying that on the instructions of the leaders of the three republics he had "on that day sent all the former subjects of the federation letters and the full text of the accords, so as to enable them to express their opinion on joining the commonwealth."

Shushkevich pointed out to the deputies that renunciation of the Union structures does not mean ignoring the legal acts of the former USSR which are as yet absent from Belorussian [as published] legislation.

The standing commissions of the parliament have been instructed to prepare by 17 December their conclusions in respect of the accord on the establishment of the commonwealth of independent states.

Lenin's bust was carried out of the hall where the session is being held.

Shushkevich: Nazarbayev Ready For Commonwealth

PM1212184991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, INTERFAX, RIA, REUTER column]

[Text] Stanislav Shushkevich, chairman of the Belarussian Supreme Soviet, announced at a session of the republic's parliament that President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev had spoken during a telephone conversation with him of Kazakhstan's readiness to join the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Coupons To Replace Ruble 1 January

LD1312102591 Moscow TASS in English 0944 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By BELTA correspondent Anna Gladysheva-TASS]

[Text] Minsk December 13 TASS—Belarus has decided to use coupons from January 1, 1992 to replace the worthless rouble in an effort to stabilise the economic situation in the republic.

Under a republican governmental resolution, 60 per cent of salaries and wages will be paid in coupons, the rest in roubles. Pensioners, students and other lower-income people will be paid only in coupons.

Local bankers hope the move will help protect the republic's economy from external "rouble intervention" and prevent the hyper- inflation of other republics being imported into Belarus.

Moldova

Clash on Dubossary Bridge Leaves Dead, Wounded

LD1312073191 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 0630 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] We have just received a report on the aggravation of the situation in the Dnestr Republic. On the Dubossary bridge on the Volgograd-Kishinev road, machine gun fire opened up. A clash between policemen from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova and those defending the interests and rights of residents of the Dnestr Moldovan Republic flared up. According to reports both from the Moldovan Ministry of Internal Affairs and from the Dnestr Republic, there are dead and wounded on both sides. There is no specific data on the number of casualties.

Dnestr Charges 'Invasion' by Police

LD1312104591 Moscow TASS in English 1009 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[Text] Kishinev December 13 TASS—Several people were killed and wounded as a result of shoot-out between armed gangs from the Dnestr Republic and Moldovan police on a bridge across the Dnestr River near the city of Dubossary at 5 a.m. on Friday.

The Moldovan Interior Ministry described the incident as a provocation organised by leaders of the Dnestr Republic, which recently proclaimed its independence from Moldova, to foil the talks between Moldovan President Mircea Snegur and the presidents of Belarus, Ukraine and Russia.

The Dnestr Republic, however, accused the police of "aggression provoked by the People's Front of Moldova to upset the Moldovan president's talks in Moscow".

"At 6 a.m., Moldovan police began the invasion of the Dnestr Republic. A fight broke out. It lasted for 40 minutes. Now, the city is divided into two parts. One is being controlled by Moldovan police while the other by the Dnestr Republic's guard. Clashes continue. There are killed and wounded on both sides, including civilians," the press bureau of the Dnestr Republic said.

The report said the invasion began after the Moldovan parliament urged the Dnestr Republic's guards to lay down their arms and called for a trial over the organisers of the presidential elections and the referendum in the Dnestr Republic.

According to reports, Moldovan police used Romanian weapons.

'Massive Intrusion' Alleged

LD1312122191 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1100 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] The Dnestr Republic Press Bureau has reported that at 0600 in the Dubossary area Moldovan police forces began a massive intrusion into the territory of the Dnestr Republic. A battle ensued which lasted approximately 40 minutes. At present the town is divided into two parts: one is controlled by the Moldovan police, the other by the armed formations of the Dnestr Republican Guard. Confrontations continue. There are wounded and killed even among civilians. The report of the press bureau points out that the Moldovan policemen are using Romanian made weapons, and that the intrusion took place immediately after the decision by the Moldovan Parliament to disarm the Dnestr Republican Guard within 10 days and to prosecute the organizers of the elections and the referendum in the Dnestr Republic.

Dnestr Troops Sent to Dubossary

LD1312115491 Moscow TASS in English 1130 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Fyodor Angeli]

[Text] Kishinev December 13 TASS—Leaders of the Dnestr Republic in Moldova have ordered reserve units of the republican guard to move from Tiraspol to Dubossary and Grigoriopol after 13 people were killed and several wounded in armed clashes in the republic on Friday morning.

The Moldovan Interior Ministry told TASS Moldovan police are being taken hostage in the Dnestr Republic.

By noon, half of Dubossary was under the control of Moldovan police forces

Snegur Cuts Short Trip to Russia

LD1312113191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1049 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By BELTA-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Minsk, 13 Dec (TASS)— Upon receiving initial reports on the events in the Dnestr Republic on his return from Khatyn, Mircea Snegur, president of the Moldovan Republic, decided to cut short his trip to the states which signed the agreement on a commonwealth to go immediately to Kishinev. "On the basis of the incomplete information at my disposal," he told journalists,"the armed clashes near Dubossary can be seen as the actions of separatists who do not find the national consensus within the republic to their liking."

The Moldovan president left Minsk for Kishinev at midday.

Ministry Statement on Dnestr Attacks on Police

LD1212221891 Kishinev Radio Kishinev Network in Russian 0700 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] The press office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova is authorized to state that the campaign of persecution, hounding, and humiliation of police officers is continuing on the left bank of the Dnestr River.

On 10 December at about 1500 near the village of Lunga Noue in Dubossarskiy Rayon, five so-called guards armed with automatic weapons stopped a ZIL-130 car carrying uniformed police Sergeant Izmaylov of the point duty and patrol police of Dubossary Internal Affairs Department of the village of Dzerzhinsk, who was travelling to work. They dragged him out of the car, kicked him, hit him with their weapons, and removed his Makarov pistol and ammunition, after which they delivered him to the town soviet of Dubossary. They told Izmaylov that they had an order to disarm all police officers and collect their uniforms. Izmaylov went to Sinyagin, chairman of the town soviet, and on Sinyagin's instructions, at 1900 the weapon and ammunition were returned.

It is reported that during the night unknown persons are going to police officers' apartments and marking them with white crosses. An investigation is under way.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova warns that these illegal acts will not go unpunished.

Dnestr Ready To Talk With Republic Leadership

OW1312044091 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2027 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Supreme Soviet of the Dnestr Moldovan Republic has expressed readiness to open talks with the leadership of Moldova to settle all the differences in view of the current political situation.

A republic on the left bank of the Dnestr populated mainly by Russians and Ukrainians was proclaimed in the autumn of last year. It was not recognized by Moldova's authorities.

Last August Kishinev accused the Dnestr leaders of supporting the unconstitutional coup staged by the Emergency Committee.

Military Denies Leaflet Drop; Weapons Seized

PM1212155391 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 11 Dec 91 First Edition p 5

[Correspondent Colonel N. Mulyar report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Election Held Successfully. But to Whom Were Weapons Addressed?"]

[Text] Moldova, 10 Dec—In Moldova 8 December the entire people elected the president of the republic. The election was held under complex conditions. The People's Front came out against the candidacy of Mircea Snegur. Despite this opposition, however, M. Snegur became the first president elected by the entire people.

Claims, prompted by high officials, have appeared in the mass media—both foreign and local—that military helicopters of Odessa Military District dropped leaflets calling for an election boycott in various parts of the republic on the eve of the election, at 1700 on 7 December.

"That is the purest fabrication," Major General V. Gerasimenko, district first deputy chief of staff, said in conversation. "There were no military helicopters flying over Moldovan territory at that time, as can easily be verified from documents. I believe that that statement is another attempt to compromise the troops, who are not interfering in political events in Moldova."

At the same time I have received information that vehicles carrying weapons heading from Romania to Moldova have been detained in the region of the Moldavian village of Leusheny. I tried to verify this information with Lieutenant Colonel V. Seredkin, chief of Kishinev Border Detachment.

"I know nothing about this," came the reply.

[Mulyar] "But is this information known about in the border district?"

"I am not prepared to reply," Viktor Georgiyevich said briefly, breaking off the conversation...

Then I contacted Lt. Col. R. Zamanov, chief of the Leusheny Village Border Checkpoint.

"Yes, there was such a thing," he said. "At 2130 on 7 December we detained six KamAZ trucks which, according to the documents, were carrying things packed in boxes. They were heading from Romania to the Kishinev 'Tekhnointerkomerts' foreign trade association. When we opened one box to check it, there were seven Romanian-made submachine guns inside. The same in the remaining boxes. For whom was such a large quantity of weapons destined?"

The entire load has been detained and handed over to representatives of the Moldovan Ministry of National Security. Criminal proceedings have been instituted.

RSFSR Policy Causes Price Liberalization

LD0712201891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1744 GMT 5 Dec 91

[Text] Kishinev, 5 Dec (TASS)—"By adopting a decision on price liberalization, Russia is obliging us to urgently proceed to the adoption of similar measures," Moldovan Deputy Finance Minister Aleksey Chemyrtan declared in an interview on national television. He stressed that, during discussion of the question at a sitting of the parliament's budget and finance commission, it was pointed out that the decision on liberalization would evidently come into force on 1 January. But it might start sooner if other republics decided on the freeing of fixed prices for manufactured and food goods. Aleksey Chemyrtan also announced that the Moldovan Government would introduce regulated prices for basic foods and also for petroleum products and electrical power.

Former Dissident Named Security Adviser

LD0712033991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1652 GMT 6 Dec 91

[Text] Kishinev, 6 Dec (MOLDOVA-PRES-TASS)—Aleksandr Sholtoyanu, a former political dissident of the 1960's, has been confirmed in the post of adviser to the Moldovan Minister of National Security.

After graduating in 1965 from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the USSR Foreign Ministry he had already been enrolled to work at the Soviet embassy in Morocco, but, being accused of "nationalism", he became an inmate of the KGB.

Presidential Election Campaign Reviewed

PM1212143191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Nov 91 Union Edition p 4

[Correspondent E. Kondratov report: "Will the President Be Elected President?"]

[Text] Kishinev—Mircea Ion Snegur, president of Moldova by the will of parliament who wants to be confirmed in this post by the will of the people, is coming to the end of his election campaign. He seems to have meetings with voters in cities and villages every single day. Judging by the television reports, Snegur has solid backing at local level. He has no rivals. There were a couple at first, but not very serious ones: the writer G. Malarchuk, nominated by the "Greens," and the former head of the now disbanded Moldovan Communist Party, G. Yeremey. The former stepped down as a mark of protest: In some places the local authorities prevented people from campaigning for him. The latter would definitely have been disgraced if he had not done the same, because odious party apparatchiks are not held in esteem in Moldova nowadays. The only man who could have been a dangerous rival is M. Druk, retired prime minister and idol of the People's Front—if parliament had not "neutralized" him in time. Deputies voted by the requisite majority to adopt a law on presidential elections containing the mandatory condition that only someone who has lived in the republic for the last 10 years can be elected to that post. Druk returned to Moldova only quite recently.

There would seem to be no point trying to guess who is going to be the first popularly elected president. However, no one would risk betting that Snegur's success is a foregone conclusion either. The candidate is having to work hard to undermine and remove the obstacles standing between him and a presidency sanctified by the will of the people.

There are three such obstacles. The first: strong opposition to Moldova from the Dnestr region and the Gagauz south, which have declared themselves independent republics. They will elect their own presidents one week before. So it seems likely that at least one-fifth of Moldova's population will not go to the polls 8 December. The second: the negative attitude of many Russians and Ukrainians to the policy of national revival, which has led to manifestations of everyday and bureaucratic nationalism. Finally, the third and most serious: the noisy campaign to boycott the elections initiated by the People's Front and supported by radical national movements in the "16 December" alliance. It is no longer only the candidate's platform and statements that are being maligned: His character is being defamed as well.

Very recently, even the idea of possible confrontation between the Moldovan People's Front and the president would have seemed ridiculous. After all, the People's Front created Snegur's image as a true son of Moldova, contrasting him to party stooges and "Moscow proteges."

However, fortune has definitely smiled on Mircea Snegur. Two years ago, when Moldova's former "bigwigs" were being savaged by tub-thumping national democrats, the Central Committee secretary for agriculture was not even mentioned in the People's Front "dazibao" [wall posters in Chinese "Cultural Revolution"]. It was the ideologues who were crucified. M. Snegur's transfer to the distinguished but, at that time, relatively ineffectual post of chairman of the Moldovan Supreme Soviet Presidium virtually coincided with the adoption of the law on state language. Snegur was becoming the personification of national victory in the eyes of Moldovans. The new Moldovan parliament elected its chairman: Snegur confidently overcame his rival, Moldovan Communist Party Central Committee First Secretary P. Luchinskiy, who managed to lose his recent extraordinary popularity. When parliament—alarmed by events in the Gagauz south and the Dnestr region—decided to quickly elect a president, there was no alternative to Snegur.

However, we must give Mircea Snegur his due: He has shown a rare ability to impress the most diverse political groups. Some are attracted by his determination in pursuing Moldovan sovereignty, his implacable attitude to separatism, and his readiness to develop a closer relationship with Moldova's brothers on the other side of the Prut if at all possible. Others see him as an experienced economic worker, a realist not inclined to hasty gestures. They like the fact that he does not fawn on Moscow but does not go to extremes either: He weighs up every decision, advocating the principle of the ancients—"consistency and gradual progress." Only when Snegur's incompatibility with Premier Druk became apparent did the People's Front forsake its "Galatea-89." The "marshal of the Gagauz campaign," forcibly removed from his post as prime minister, has become a banner for national radicals in their political struggle against the "procommunist" parliamentary majority and the president it supports.

This fall the People's Front officially announced that it would be joining the opposition to the Republic of Moldova's state power. It accused it of sliding toward a neocommunist dictatorship, resurrecting the former party nomenklatura, lacking principle in its relations with the USSR, and being incapable of dealing with separatists, implementing radical economic reform, and driving out "occupation" troops. In its declaration on boycotting the elections it insists that Moldova does not need a president and that a parliamentary republic is the only acceptable form of genuinely democratic government. In both documents Snegur personally is a target for poisoned arrows. He is accused of being intolerant of dissent, encroaching on the freedom of the press, and, most important of all, usurping power, which he has achieved by means of unsavory political maneuvers.

There were certainly definite reasons behind the collection of barbed accusations hurled at the authorities by the Moldovan People's Front. But the opposition was, nevertheless, being cunning (or did it perhaps lose courage?) in declaring political war on Mircea Snegur. The People's Front ideologues are keeping quiet about their fundamental difference of opinion with the president regarding Moldova's future. But this is the heart of the matter! As far as Druk and his apologists are concerned, Moldova's future is ordained by God: the earliest possible reunification with Romania. There can be no question of recognizing the independence of an "illusory state," because, according to Druk, the very concept of a "sovereign Moldova" is "mere verbiage." The subject of uniting Russian-occupied Bessarabia with the "motherland" features constantly in opposition newspapers nowadays. As a champion of Moldovan independence, Snegur is accused of fear of all things Romanian and of subservience to stooges and to the "quislings who for 50 years took a rod to the backs of the Bessarabian Romanians."

They also cannot forgive him his "betrayal": Moldova's signing of the Treaty on an Economic Community of Sovereign States. The opposition believes that Snegur and Prime Minister Muravskiy should resign merely for this attempt to return Moldova to the empire and the "common herd." The hardships that threaten the republic if it abandons the treaty are not a source of concern to the radicals, who say: "Better to live on bread and salt and see the sky." Romanian journalist N. Lupan has tried to set people's minds at rest in the People's Front newspaper TSARA: "Every cloud has a silver lining... If the Russians and Ukrainians 'turn off the taps,' unification will be a matter of two or three months..."

A recent action by the Moldovan People's Front has been to send its leaders to Bucharest, where they appealed to the president and parliament of the "motherland" to grant Romanian citizenship to residents of Moldova. This is noisily discussed at rallies—which are admittedly not very well attended any more. On the other hand, a group of demonstrators led by a parliamentary deputy paid a visit to Snegur's home, where they chanted insults at him. The president—as is the custom nowadays—called on the parliamentary presidium to make a fitting assessment of this "attempt to stage a putsch like the one in Moscow."

Despite the fact that the anti-Snegur campaign continues to gather momentum, its effectiveness is weak. The optimism of the Moldovan People's Front leader, Yu. Roshka, who has announced the start of a "new round," is hardly justified. The authority of the People's Front continues to wane. Even writers, once the soul of the national revival movement, have turned away from it. Whereas it recently found allies among the masses by waging war on the Communist Party, the "imperial center," and "Russification," it has now lost these traditional enemies. The struggle against Snegur—a supporter of Moldovan independence—cannot be popular. The appeal to unite with Romania frightens most Moldovans, who believe that the best time for their nation was when the "Romanians had left and the Russians had not yet arrived." The birth of the Agrarian Democratic Party, which unites virtually all village leaders, has seriously weakened the influence of the Moldovan People's Front in rural areas. Moldova is tired of political extremism and the endless struggle against someone and something, it cares more about the problems of peaceful survival as life steadily deteriorates. That is why Mircea Snegur's political credo—independence, civil peace, and national prosperity—is finding a response in people on both sides of the Dnestr and even in the People's Front itself.

I should point out that the presidential candidate's election program has been skillfully put together. The interests of different social strata are weighed with all the precision of an apothecary. Consequently it finds favor with those who fear the disintegration of the collective farm system and those in favor of free, individual farms. The idea of a national army, national currency, independent customs service, and rehabilitation for the victims of repression strikes a chord with Moldovan patriots. And the non-Moldovan population cannot fail to be won over by the promise to form a government of national accord on the basis of professional rather than political criteria and, moreover, taking the population's ethnic structure into account. Guarantees of civil equality for people of all nationalities can be found in many paragraphs of Snegur's program, and this alone will obviously bring him a considerable number of votes among Ukrainians, Russians, Jews, and Bulgarians.

Most Moldovans who go to the polling places will probably also vote for Snegur. Whether there is a sufficient turnout for the elections to be considered valid is another matter. Incidentally, representatives of several foreign countries have been specially invited as observers.

So, unless some extraordinary event takes place in Moldova in the few days left before 8 December, it seems likely that the president will be elected president. But it is still dangerous to try to predict the outcome: In recent years, the fall weather in Moldova has been terribly unsettled.

Ukraine

Kravchuk Assumes Command of Armed Forces

LD1212183791 Moscow TASS in English 1806 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Sergey Balykov—TASS]

[Text] Kiev December 12 TASS - Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk today assumed the duties of commander-in-chief of the republic's Armed Forces.

The presidential decree on the Ukrainian Armed Forces was signed on the same day. These forces will include troops from the Kiev, Odessa and Carpathian military districts, the Black Sea Fleet, as well as from other military units deployed in the Ukrainian territory. Ukrainian jurisdiction does not apply to units of strategic deterrence forces deployed in the Ukraine.

This work must be conducted stage-by-stage in accordance with the plan for defence and creation of the republic's Armed Forces endorsed by the Ukrainian Supreme Council.

Under the decree, the Ukrainian defence minister is subordinate to the president, and the duties of commander of the Ukrainian Armed Forces are entrusted to the defence minister. His duties include administrative management of troops deployed in the republic's territory until the creation of the Ukrainian Armed Forces is completed. He will also control the state of the troops, their planned movements, and transportation of military equipment, armaments and property.

Kravchuk on Appointment

OW1212234491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2027 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President of Ukraine Leonid Kravchuk signed an order appointing himself the republican commander-in-chief, said he at his Thursday meeting with Lithuanian Foreign Minister Algirdas Saudargas.

The new post is provided for by the defense law the Ukrainian parliament passed last week.

But since the Ukrainian military forces have yet to be created, Mr. Kravchuk will probably be in command of Soviet troops stationed in the republic.

They are: three military districts, an air army and the Black Sea fleet. Combined strength: around 1.5 mn. [million]

Press Secretary on Control

LD1212172791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1618 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Valentin Vasilets—Moscow TASS International Service in Russian at 1655 GMT on 12 December transmits a request that the following item be killed]

[Text] Ottawa, 12 Dec (TASS)—Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk has signed a decree proclaiming that he is taking the Soviet Armed Forces on the territory of the republic under his personal control, with the exception of the nuclear forces, which will remain under the unified command of the commonwealth of independent states.

This was reported to a correspondent of the Canadian press agency in Kiev by V. Shlyapnikov, the president's press secretary. According to Shlyapnikov, the decree will be published later. Shlyapnikov said that Kravchuk informed Soviet military leaders of his step and secured their "complete understanding." Boris Yeltsin was previously notified of the Ukrainian president's decision.

Communications Troops Vow Loyalty

LD1212204191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1600 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] According to a report by the Russian News Agency, the Communications Regiment was the first among military units in the Ukraine to vow its loyalty to the Ukraine. Its commander is Colonel Velen Martirasyan, USSR People's Deputy. His men have sworn to defend the Ukrainian state and its independence. A Ukrainian national flag has been hoisted over the regiment's base.

Kravchuk Meets Army, Navy Commanders

LD1212191191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1614 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent Sergey Balykov]

[Text] Kiev, 12 Dec (TASS)—Issues regarding the building of the national armed forces in keeping with the laws adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Ukraine were discussed at a meeting at Leonid Kravchuk's office today. The Ukrainian president had conversations with commanders of the troops of the districts, of the Black Sea Fleet, and with the commanders of the formations stationed on the republic's territory.

As has already been reported, last week the Ukrainian parliament adopted the Ukrainian laws on defense and the armed forces, and ratified the text of the military oath.

Supreme Soviet Amends Commonwealth Treaty Name

OW1212154291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1450 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Thursday the Ukrainian parliament adopted another amendment to the treaty signed last Sunday by the leaders of Russia, Belorussia and the Ukraine, replacing the document's initial name, "Treaty on Creating the Commonwealth of Independent States" with "Treaty on the Commonwealth of Independent States". The word "creating" is deleted.

The amendment was suggested by Igor Yukhovskiy, leader of the Democratic faction, People's Council.

As the speaker of the Ukrainian parliament Ivan Plyushch told MPs [members of parliament], President Leonid Kravchuk has no objections to the amendment.

On Monday the Ukrainian parliament adopted 12 amendments to the treaty, particularly on consultations in the area of foreign policy, strategic weapons and the forming by the members states of their own armed forces.

Changes in Treaty Made

LD1212231891 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] The Ukrainian Supreme Soviet has added one more amendment to the Belovezhskaya agreement. Svetlana Ryaboshapka has details from Kiev:

[Ryaboshapka] As we know, the other twelve amendments were about the openness of the borders. In the deputies' opinion they must be permeable only for information and for contacts between the citizens of the signatory states, but they should not be too transparent for those who want to obtain a residence permit or a work permit from their neighbors. The Ukraine also believes that it can deal with its own foreign policy without outside guidance, but it is willing to consult others on these questions.

The most interesting point of the agreement is about the Armed Forces. While Yeltsin tells the military about a united command, the Ukraine is steadily going toward creating its own army, rightfully believing that this is a necessary attribute of statehood. There is a clear discrepancy in the understanding of this point of the agreement. It is absolutely evident that this is only the beginning. Because, while signing this document that has drawn so much attention, each of the three leaders was pursuing his own specific goals. The agreement itself may be considered as a perfect illustration of the swan, the crab, and the pike all pulling in different directions. It is equally clear how such a troika will be able to go anywhere. And if before 8 December it was the center that was trying to hold together the disintegrating inviolable Union, now Russia is trying to do it. One can presume that the result will be the same.

As far as the Ukraine is concerned, having gleefully killed the center with the help of the tripartite union, it will continue its own path. This is a historic pattern. The moment of the signing of the agreement is gone and the Union is dead. Now the Ukrainian version of the text of the agreement is completely different from the Russian. Even the titles are different from now on. It was decided that this was not the Agreement on the Creation of the commonwealth of Independent States, but simply the Agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States. And in the Ukrainian version the word commonwealth starts with a lower case c, simply to indicate friendly relations. To be absolutely correct the Ukrainian deputies should erase the mention of independent states, because formally neither Russia nor Belarus are independent. But let us set formalities aside. What is important is that the agreement, even with all the amendments, causes more and more dissatisfaction. So much has been signed but no one can get either gasoline or the wooden rubles made in Russia. And no one can get them even for one's own production, which the Ukraine continues to supply dutifully. A strong feeling emerges that all these signatures are nonsensical, and one can only count on oneself.

According to a report from the EVROIKS Agency and Ukrainian television, President Kravchuk, acting in this spirit, appointed himself today the commander of the armed forces on the territory of the Ukrainian state. If this is true one can only imagine the expression on the faces of the other presidents.

Consultative Council Approves of Commmonwealth

OW1312013091 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1450 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Consultative Council at the Ukrainian parliament, which includes foreign advisers, on the whole approved the treaty on the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] with amendments made during its ratification by Ukrainian MPs [memebers of parliament].

The council's executive secretary, American economist Ivan Gevko, told IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent that the treaty's greatest asset is the forming of coordinating structures in the field of strategic defense, in economics and in the humanitarian area. According to I. Gevko, this will preclude a further disintegration of economic ties during transition from a unitary state to a commonwealth of independent states.

However, I. Gevko said, the treaty has insufficient guarantees against the transformation of coordinating bodies into new union structures.

According to the American adviser, the forming of the CIS is an unpleasant event for the U.S. President George Bush, considering his longstanding contacts with Mikhail Gorbachev. Nevertheless, if George Bush assesses the forming of the CIS from the viewpoint of the possible geopolitical changes without succumbing to the influence of personal factors, it will be possible to rely on his support.

Kravchuk Urges Bush To Recognize Ukraine

LD1212221991 Kiev Radio Kiev International Service in Lithuanian 2000 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Text] Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk has sent a letter to U.S. President George Bush. As one of the founding members of the United Nations, the letter reads, the Ukraine will adhere steadily to all of its international commitments, pursue a consistent and peace-loving foreign policy, and actively will foster developing international cooperation. Kravchuk expressed his conviction that establishing relations with the United States as soon as possible will correspond with the sincere desire of the peoples of our two countries and the interests of international peace and stability. Great importance is attached in this connection to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's coming visit to the Ukraine.

Talks With Bush Envoy

LD1312105891 Kiev Radio Kiev Network in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 8 Dec 91

[Excerpts] a three-day visit to the Ukraine by Thomas Niles, special representative of the U.S. President, began yesterday. He came to Kiev with a delegation, and has already held a series of talks with the Ukraine's leaders. Our correspondent Vitaliy Naumenko was present at some. Here is his report:

[Naumenko]: Talks between Leonid Kravchuk and the U.S. President's special representative lasted nearly two hours, instead of the one hour that was envisaged. The first thing Mr. Niles did was to congratulate the Ukraine's president on the results of the referendum—the results of which, for us, were simply stunning, the American diplomat said. [passage omitted]. Primarily Mr. Niles was interested in the development of mutual relations between Russia and the Ukraine, and the attitude to the Russian-speaking population in the Ukraine. Here's the reply from the Ukrainian president:

[Begin Kravchuk recording] We think that in the Ukraine, Russians enjoy full rights—economic and political, as regards language, and culture—everything included in this complex of national and cultural—and not only national and cultural, problems. For example, 22 per cent of the population are Russians. Half the Ukraine's children are taught in Russian schools. There are two theaters in Kiev—one Russian, one Ukrainian. In all oblast centers where there is a predominantly Russian population the theaters are Russian, as well as movie theaters, newspapers, radio, and television.

In some regions there is discrimination against the Ukrainian population. For example, there are 600,000 Ukrainians in the Crimea and there isn't a single Ukrainian school; there isn't a single Ukrainian newspaper. Therefore Russians can't say that life for them in the Ukraine is worse than in Saratov oblast. And they voted for Ukrainian independence because it's their land, it's our common land. For Russians there will never be any kind of discrimination, any kind of restrictions. We are together.

Another example: the Ukraine's prime minister is Russian. The recently-appointed minister of defense is Russian. The Ukraine's general procurator—the first to be appointed—is Russian. The share of Russians in the cadres in the Ukraine is higher than Ukrainians with regard to percentages of the population.

Unfortunately we cannot say that Ukrainians live as well in Russia. There aren't any Ukrainian schools—for 5 million people—there aren't any newspapers or radio or television, so therefore there will be nothing for those wishing to play the Russian card in the Ukraine. I can say to you with all responsibility that Russians in the Ukraine live better today than Russians in Russia—and will live normally [chuckles] and therefore there will be no grounds in our country for confrontation between Ukrainians or Russians. We will not allow this to happen. We will conduct this policy rigorously, knowing that this can become a main subject for those forces who wish very much to see Ukrainians at loggerheads with Russians; but we will not allow this.[end recording]

[Naumenko] A significant part of the conversation was devoted to a complex of international questions: The integration of the Ukraine's economy into the world economy and the coexistence of the new state with the world community. Especially, Thomas Niles said, we are interested in your plans regarding obligations within the framework of the European security conference. The Ukraine is one of four republics of the former Soviet Union to have a nuclear potential. Taking into account the uncertainty of the situation on the territory of the former empire, questions of international security stand out sharply. The U.S. President's special representative asked President Kravchuk how he intended to protect his interests. The Ukrainian president replied:

[Begin Kravchuk recording] The Ukraine was among the first to support President Bush's initiative on destroying tactical nuclear weapons. I said this to President Bush and I said it at the United Nations. I wish to say that not only will we support, but also we will initiate and we will seek mechanisms so as to ratify these treaties as soon as possible, because I can't see how the Union can ratify them right now. Where? There isn't, strictly speaking, a full-blooded parliament there. Therefore we, in the near future, will submit to the Ukraine's parliament that all treaties, including the treaty between the United States and the Union, concluded in 1991, on reducing strategic nuclear forces on the Ukraine's territory, be ratified.

Today I will be taking to Minsk a proposal that Russia, the Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan come to an agreement that each of these republics ratify the treaty on destroying strategic and tactical nuclear weapons, whereby these four states will specify their position on this question, which is the most important for Europe and the world. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Independence of Croatia, Slovenia Recognized

LD1212162491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1537 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Kiev, 12 Dec (TASS)— The Supreme Soviet Presidium of Ukraine has adopted the decision to recognize the state independence of the Croatian Republic and the Slovenian Republic, and to establish full diplomatic relations with the two republics.

Diplomatic Relations Established With Lithuania

OW1212142591 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1413 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] BF [BALTFAX] reports from Kiev that the foreign ministers of Ukraine and Lithuania Anatoliy Zlenko and Algirdas Saudargas have exchanged notes on the mutual recognition of their states and the establishment of diplomatic relations. Speaking at a ceremony in Kiev Saudargas said that from now on relations between Ukraine and Lithuania would be built on the basis of international law.

Notes on Relations Exchanged

LD1212205791 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 2000 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] The foreign ministers of Lithuania and Ukraine today in Kiev exchanged notes on the establishment of diplomatic relations. After the exchange a conversation between the ministers took place. They discussed the prospects for cooperation between Lithuania and Ukraine in the spheres of politics, the economy, ecology, and culture. It was decided that embassies will for the time being be opened only in Vilnius and Kiev. The interests of both states will be represented by the Ukrainian and Lithuanian charge d'affaires. They will be appointed in the nearest future.

The Lithuanian foreign minister had a talk with Ukrainian president Leonid Kravchuk and Dmitriy Pavlichko, chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet Foreign Affairs Commission.

Italian Delegation Ends Visit To Kiev

AU1312114791 Rome ANSA in English 1031 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] (ANSA) Kiev, December 12—The formation of a commonwealth of independent states announced Sunday by the leaders of Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia, who also declared that the Soviet Union had ceased to exist, was spoken of as an irreversible step by Ukrainian ministers in consultations with an Italian delegation.

The visiting delegation, led by the Rome Foreign Ministry's deputy director general for economic affairs, Francesco Alovi, voiced satisfaction with assurances given by the republic's authorities that the Ukraine intends to fully respect international agreements signed by the former Soviet Union, including the disarmament accords covering conventional forces and nuclear warheads.

Anatoliy Zlenko, the foreign minister of the republic which overwhelmingly voted full independence in a referendum held December 1, reminded the Italians in a two-hour talk that the Ukraine has declared its territory a "denuclearized zone" and that the thousands of tactical and strategic warheads now deployed in the republic are there "temporarily." He said the Ukraine would be arguing for centralized control of all the nuclear weapons of the Soviet Union.

He also reiterated the point that the Ukraine will seek full membership in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and observe all the commitments connected to this step, especially those on the defense of human rights and the inviolability of frontiers.

Speaking today, after two days of talks here wound up last night, Aloisi said the mission delivered messages from Italian President Francesco Cossiga, Premier Giulio Andreotti and Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis to the newly-elected Ukrainian president, Leonid Kravchuk. The letters contained congratulations on his election and praise for the democratic climate in which the December 1 balloting was held.

The delegation, which included the head of the Foreign Ministry's Technical Office, Stefano Parisi, and Aldo Amati, the first secretary at the Italian Embassy in Moscow, told the president Rome will decide on the timing and means for recognizing the Ukraine's independence in concert with Italy's European Community partners.

In meetings yesterday, the republic's ministers for the economy and investments, Valeriy Kravchenko and Vladimir Borisovskiy, briefed the visiting Italians on economic policy the Kiev government intends to pursue. Also up for discussion were the activities of Italian companies now operating in the Ukraine and prospects for boosting cooperation, with the focus on telecommunications and agriculture.

By the end of February next year, it was learned, Italy expects to open a general consulate and an Italian Foreign Trade Institute (ICE) office in Kiev.

The senior Italian diplomats here came as the first foreign delegation to visit the Ukraine since the republic's independence vote.

Kravchuk: Gorbachev's Future 'Not Our Problem'

PM1212130591 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 10 Dec 91 p 1

[O. Musafirova report under the general heading: "I Woke Up and Hey Presto! No Soviet Power..."]

[Text] Kiev—At a press-conference yesterday, L. Kravchuk said: "I believe that we have acted correctly in setting up a commonwealth which is open to all the other former union republics—including the Baltic states—without deviating from our own constitutions or from international legal norms. Under no circumstances would Ukraine sign a Union treaty presupposing a state within a state. We have formulated our idea and signed an interstate agreement, a European project for greater political, economic, and social coexistence. Gorbachev's Union treaty is a basic camouflage of the old administrative-command system.

"I cannot say that Mikhail Sergeyevich reacted positively to the events in Minsk. There were difficult telephone conversations with him on this score. But nevertheless... I will not be pressured. Indeed, we can say nothing about President Gorbachev's future role and place. That is not our problem."

Supreme Soviet Leader Urges Cabinet Reform

LD0812165391 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 2000 GMT 7 Dec 91

[Text] Ivan Plyushch, the new chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, elected to that post to replace Leonid Kravchuk who has become president, has said that the republican Cabinet of Ministers should be reformed as soon as possible. Speaking at a Kiev news conference, he said that the present republican government structure follows the Moscow command-administrative model.

Plyushch let it be known that Vitold Fokin, the present premier, should not count on any sympathy from the head of the legislature. The new parliamentary chairman said that on this issue it is most likely he will not back President Leonid Kravchuk, who has promised to keep Fokin on as head of government.

Cabinet Orders Food Sent to Moscow

LD1212211291 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1700 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] The Ukraine has started sending shipments of foodstuffs to Moscow. We received this report today from Kiev:

The Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers, fulfilling instructions from President Leonid Kravchuk, has ordered the sending to Moscow of sugar, sunflower oil, meat, and meat products. As reported to an INTERFAX correspondent at the press service of The Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers, the quantity of produce dispatched corresponds with the request made by Russia's Government.

Supreme Soviet Supports CFE Treaty

AU1312101591 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian No. 232, 30 Nov. 91 p 2

["Statement by the Ukrainian Supreme Council Presidium Concerning the 1990 Treaty on the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe"; date not given]

[Text] Guided by the goals and tasks of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe,

Confirming its allegiance to the idea of establishing secure and stable peace on the European continent, and

Realizing the urgent need to maintain conventional armed forces in Europe at levels lower than before,

The Presidium of the Ukrainian Supreme Council

1. Supports the 1990 Treaty on the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and calls upon all its participants to ratify and implement it as soon as possible.

2. Emphasizes that the Ukraine, as one of the successors of the former USSR, considers it as obligatory to fulfill the clauses of the treaty concerning all conventional armed forces that are stationed on its territory, including the procedures for inspection and control stipulated by the treaty. The Armed Forces of the Ukraine are subject to the action of the treaty.

3. Declares the Ukraine's readiness to start consultations or negotiations with all interested parties, including the relevant structures of the former USSR, for guaranteeing complete fulfillment of the clauses of the treaty.

4. Confirms the Ukraine's allegiance to the continuation of the process of control over conventional weapons and proceeds from the fact that the Ukraine's direct participation in this process, including negotiations, will contribute to the strengthening of European stability and security, including the security of the Ukraine.

5. Points out that the Ukraine's direct participation in the CSCE process is important for the fulfillment by it of the obligations that ensue from the clauses of the treaty.

Kravchuk Approves Statement

AU1312101891 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian No. 232, 30 Nov. 91 p 2

["Resolution by the Presidium of the Ukrainian Supreme Council Concerning the Ukrainian Supreme Council Presidium Statement on the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty Concluded in 1990"; issued in Kiev on 22 November 1991]

[Text] The Presidium of the Ukrainian Supreme Council resolves as follows:

To approve the text of the statement by the Presidium of the Ukrainian Supreme Council on the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty (attached).

[Signed] L. Kravchuk, chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Council

22 November 1991, Kiev

Republic Party Presents Platform

LD1312112791 Kiev Radio Kiev in English 0100 GMT 8 Dec 91

[Text] The board members of the Ukrainian Republican Party stated that in conformity with the will of the nation, Ukraine's state independence was consolidated. So now, together with other public and political organizations, the Ukrainian Republican Party becomes a state-creating structure. In the nearest future the party will strive for the adoption of a new Constitution and election on a multiparty basis for holding a reform of the electoral system which nowadays does not correspond to the demands and establishments of the democratic society. The Ukrainian Republican Party comes out against the idea of Ukraine's federalization because, as the party believes, it does not correspond to the interests of the Ukrainian nation. In the area of economy, the Ukrainian Republican Party comes out for introduction of our own national currency, creation of a bank and credit systems.

Armenia

Foreign Minister Views Tour; Europe 'Concerned'

NC1212170291 Yerevan ARMENPRES International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Statement given by Armenian Foreign Minister Raffi Hovhannesyan to ARMENPRES correspondent Levon Azroyan, on his return from a visit to Europe]

[Text] [Hovhannesyan] Before I left for Europe I met Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati. The meeting was important, making relations between our two neighboring states official. Official contacts with Iran have been continuing over the last few weeks, and I hope in future there will be progress in Tehran-Yerevan ties. We attach enormous importance to good neighborly relations with that country.

We visited eight European countries, meeting and holding comprehensive talks with government figures and Armenian communities' representatives. We met Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands and President of the Council of Europe [title as received] Hans van den Broek, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe Catherine Lalumiere, and various secretaries of state.

Our visit to Europe was important because it was the first official visit to these countries, France excepted, to establish business ties, discuss issues concerning the Armenian Republic, and obtain recognition for our independence.

Diplomatic and public circles are enormously interested in the Nagorno-Karabakh problem.

What was our visit's most important result? It was that the ice was finally broken. It will not melt immediately but the first important steps have been taken. I am convinced that Armenia will become a full member of the international community.

Britain, Germany, France, and Italy, particularly, endorsed Armenia being represented abroad.

There were many conversations on joint economic cooperation programs, particularly agricultural.

I think we convinced governments to play a more active role in solving the Nagorno-Karabkh problem, acting as mediators so that the sides, particularly Azerbaijan, refrain from clashes and confrontation. These countries were concerned about how long it was taking to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh problem .

Europe is concerned that Turkey, a European country, recognized Azerbaijan's independence without consulting the Council of Europe, thus upsetting the region's geopolitical balance. European diplomats believe that that balance should be restored as soon as possible.

Armenia, then, has taken small but important diplomatic steps toward getting its independence recognized, mutual economic relations established, and a solution found to the Nagorno-Karabakh problem.

Foreign Ministry Statement on Turkish Relations

NC1312090891 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1600 GMT 12 Dec 91

["Armenian Foreign Ministry Statement"]

[Text] Some Turkish, European, and even Moscow-based media have issued reports recently that in an effort to improve Armenian-Turkish relations Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan has (?assured) Turkey that Armenia may do away with the yearly (?activities) commemorating the Armenian genocide at the hands of the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the century. It has been reported that Armenia is ready to take this step if economic cooperation is established between the two states, in particular if Armenia is allowed to organize freight transportation through Turkish territory.

These claims are based on reports from Ankara by Turkish reporters that Ter-Petrosyan sent the Turkish leadership a message containing these proposals recently.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry asserts that President Ter-Petrosyan has not sent any such letter to the Turkish leadership.

Under the new political conditions, the Armenian Republic is genuinely interested in establishing normal relations with regional countries, beginning with bordering states. Armenia regards the development of trade and economic relations with Turkey as part of a civilized [word indistinct] to establish multilateral and mutually advantageous ties with neighboring countries. There can be no question, however, of doing anything that might consign the tragic period in the history of the Armenian people to oblivion.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry resolutely opposes any exploitation of Armenian-Turkish relations and believes that such acts do not help the (?difficult) process of resolving relations, which are important to the peoples of the two countries and for the mutual [words indistinct] in the region, and for the maintenance of peace.

Closer Economic Ties With Iran Discussed

92P50057A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 10 Dec 91 p 2

[Article by Valeriy Aydinyan: "Iran Can Become the Second Partner After Russia"]

[Text] This is how Yerevan City Soviet Chairman A. Galstyan, with economic cooperation in mind, responded to journalists' questions. He recently returned from this country, which he visited by official invitation of one of its largest associations—the "Mustazafa and Dzhanbazan" fund.

Numerous discussions and meetings revealed that Iran is very interested in establishing economic and political relations with Armenia. The Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict is disturbing to Iran, which would like to see peace in the Caucasus.

The Islamic Republic of Iran still is not in a hurry to recognize the independence of the Caucasus republics, but is prepared for large-scale economic cooperation. In particular, they intend to establish ties through Armenia with the European republics of the Union, and in this way to bring goods from these republics to the Near East.

The problems of opening the Armenian-Iranian border, the building of a bridge across the Araks, the establishment of direct air connections, the creation of a common bank and joint enterprises, and deliveries of Iranian gas to Armenia were discussed.

This was the first visit of an Armenian delegation to Iran in 10 years. To all appearances, a good basis for cooperation has been established.

Dalibaltayan Appointed Chief of Staff

NC1212050691 Yerevan ARMENPRES International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Text] Yerevan 11 Dec (ARMENPRES)—Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan has signed a decree appointing General Gurgen Dalibaltayan first deputy defense minister of the Armenian Republic and chief of the general staff.

Energy Blockade 'Broken' With New Branch Line

LD1312063191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1400 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] The INFORM-EKSPRESS agency has reported that the energy blockade of Armenia has been broken. Armenian construction workers have built a new branch line from Krasnyy Most to Ayrum in a very short space of time. North Caucasian gas has made its way, through Georgia, from there to the areas of Spitak and Gyumri that suffered most from the earthquake.

Azerbaijan

National Council Approves Minsk Statement

LD1212175191 Moscow TASS in English 1715 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By AZERINFORM—TASS]

[Text] Baku December 12 TASS—The National Council of the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet has approved the statement of the Belarus, Russian and Ukrainian heads. When signing the document, they proceeded from the fact that Belarus, Russia and Ukraine are three out of the four republics that founded the Soviet Union back in 1922, says the council's resolution circulated here today.

Some of the council's commissions have been instructed to hold together with the republican government consultations on bringing into accord with the norms of the Constitutional act, "On state independence of the Azerbaijan Republic", the status of the Armed Forces stationed on republican territory.

The consultations are also expected to focus on the regulation of financial and property relations with republics of the former Soviet Union, and establish the Azerbaijani attitude to the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as to submit its proposals on this issue to the council.

Mutalibov Attitude To Commonwealth 'Positive'

LD1312174591 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1400 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] President of Azerbaijan Ayaz Mutalibov has a positive attitude on the whole to the Commonwealth of Independent States. He considers it a flexible form of leaving behind the impasse in which the former Union found itself. The viewpoint of the repubican leader was put forward today at a briefing by Agayev, head of the president's press service. In the present situation, the president of Azerbaijan thinks that good preconditions have been created for the formulation of a new commonwealth of the former Union republics. In his opinion, the most important thing is that the new state formation should not have religious and ethnic hues.

Council Calls Gorbachev Initiative 'Groundless'

OW1312072691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1710 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The National Council of the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan decided to stem the powers of the Soviet people's deputies, elected by the republics.

Meeting on the 11 December, the National Council resolved to "stress that the president of the former USSR's initiative in summoning the Congress of Soviet People's Deputies was legally groundless and disparate with the political reality and to qualify this initiative as an attempt to pressurize the independent states into entering the former Union as well as an infringement of their internal affairs [no ending quotation mark as received].

NKAO Appeal for Commonwealth Membership

NC1212213591 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1600 GMT 12 Dec 91

["Appeal issued by the Executive Committee of the Soviet of People's Deputies of Nagorno-Karabakh Republic"]

[Text] The Executive Committee of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic's [NKR] Soviet of People's Deputies today appealed to Belarussian Supreme Soviet Chairman Shushkevich, Russian President Yeltsin, and Ukrainian President Kravchuk.

The appeal says: Expressing the will of the people of Nagorno- Karabakh, we appeal to you, the initiators and founders of the new association of independent states: Our people fully support the path you have taken to release the former Soviet Union and each republic [word indistinct] from the prolonged political and economic crisis. We agree with the ideas lying at the foundation of the new association. These ideas preclude totalitarianism and the domination of one nation over another. Nagorno-Karabakh's people, who were some of the first to raise the banner of struggle for democracy, are aspiring to achieve self-determination under the exceedingly difficult conditions which have prevailed during the last four years [words indistinct].

In the 10 December referendum, the overwhelming majority of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh expressed its will and defended the previously proclaimed independent NKR, which will be freely (?deciding) the form of cooperation with the states and associations formed by these states.

In the opinion of the NKR, the only acceptable solution to this problem is for the NKR to enter, as an equal member, into the structure of the association of states led by you.

We request that you urgently examine the question of the NKR's membership in the association.

The appeal has been signed by Leonard Petrosyan, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of People's Deputies of Nagorno- Karabakh.

Council Urges No 'Hasty Actions' on NKAO

OW1212160591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1450 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The National Council of the Azerbaijani Supreme Soviet has issued a statement December 11th urging all countries and international organizations to keep calm and prevent hasty actions in relation to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

"All acts adopted in Nagorno-Karabakh in violation of the Azerbaijani Constitution and laws have no judicial authority and their recognition will be considered as a hostile action against Azerbaijan and an interference in its internal affairs," the statement points out.

It also says that since illegal actions (elections, opinion polls, referendums, etc.) are being taken in Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan has to undertake measures to liquidate the seat of destabilization and terrorism. One of them was the decision of the National Council to abolish the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region.

NKAO, Armenia Decisions 'Illegal'

NC1312163691 Yerevan ARMENPRES International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Yerevan, 13 Dec (ARMENPRES)—The Azerbaijani National Council's appeal addressed to the population of Nagorno-Karabakh says: "All the unconstitutional decisions taken in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh are illegal in Azerbaijan and are regarded as interference in the internal affairs of the republic."

NKAO Referendum Observers Issue Appeal

NC1312160591 Yerevan ARMENPRES International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 13 Dec 91

["Appeal Issued by the Referendum Observers"]

[Text] Yerevan, 13 Dec (ARMENPRES)—A group of twenty observers—USSR, Russian and Moscow soviet people's deputies and representatives of public organizations and movements, including Yuriy Afanasyev, Vladimir Smirnov, Irina Burkova, Konstantin Voyevodskiy, Kiril Aleksevskiy, and others—which followed the course of the referendum in Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR] has appealed to the world's parliaments and public, human rights and religious organizations, to all noble people asking them to support the people of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The authors of the declaration have noted that the 10 December referendum, in which 82 percent of the eligible voters of NKR took part and 99.7 percent of whom voted in favor of the previously proclaimed independence of the NKR, was passed during constant firing and artillery shelling at the Armenian settlements. Ten people were killed and 11 injured, and that only on the day of the referendum.

The appeals says: According to our information, the nascent republic is being surrounded by massive Azerbaijani National Guard and People's Front forces, as well as by OMON [Special Purpose Militia Detachment] forces, which are armed with heavy military equipment.

We, the impartial observers, attest that the Azerbaijani side is conducting a war of usurpation against Nagorno-Karabakh's Armenians, who are fighting for freedom and democracy. Today they do not need mere words of compassion, the appeal concludes.

Interior Troops Chief Urges NKAO Withdrawal

*LD1312153291 Moscow TASS in English
1458 GMT 13 Dec 91*

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Gondusov]

[Text] Moscow December 13 TASS—"The agreement between heads of three independent states augurs well for breaking the deadlock, in which we have found ourselves. I hope that other republics will join it soon," Lieutenant General Vasiliy Savvin, Soviet Interior Troops commander, told TASS on Friday.

"As for the further stay of troops in Nagorno-Karabakh, it is pointless. If the troops stay, politicians will never be able to untie the knot of problems that have accumulated in the region," he said.

"It is my firm belief that neither our soldiers nor officers should deal with political problems. The presence of troops only delays the solution. The army found itself in a difficult position, as each of the warring sides wants to win it over to its side, while we must be middle-men, perform peace-making functions.

"People themselves will attain what politicians from Baku and Yerevan could not accomplish in four years," the commander-in-chief said. Proposals are very simple: a ceasefire, the withdrawal of all armed groups from Nagorno-Karabakh, creating a structure of power and law-enforcement agencies, free from any national ambitions, that will take over from the army as it will be gradually withdrawn," he concluded.

At this moment Nagorno-Karabakh is left by the servicemen who must be demobilised by the end of the year. No replacements for them are planned.

Mekhtiyev Appointed Defense Minister

*LD1312122291 Moscow TASS International
Service in Russian 1803 GMT 11 Dec 91*

[By AZERINFORM correspondent Natan Barskiy]

[Text] Baku, 11 Dec (TASS)—By decree of the Azerbaijan president, Azerbaijan Military Commissar Tadzhaddin Mekhtiyev was today appointed the republic's defense minister. The document is being submitted for consideration by the republican parliament. Colonel Mekhtiyev has been awarded the military rank of major general.

Decision on Armed Forces Call-Up Reported

*NC1312112291 Baku Radio Baku Network
in Azeri 0300 GMT 12 Dec 91*

[Text] According to President Ayaz Mutalibov's decree of 5 December, and the law on the Azerbaijan Armed Forces, the Azerbaijan Republic Council of Ministers has made a decision on the call-up of citizens for active military service and alternative services in December 1991 and March 1992. The decision calls on the Azerbaijan Republic Ministry of Defense to form units of the Azerbaijan Armed Forces, draw up draft rules and regulations for citizens' alternative services, and convey the draft to the Council of Ministers within 10 days to be submitted for consideration by the president.

Agayev Named Presidential Press Service Director

*NC1112140791 Baku Radio Baku Network
in Azeri 1800 GMT 10 Dec 91*

[Text] In accordance with instructions from President Ayaz Mutalibov, Rasim Guseyn ogly Agayev has been appointed director of the Azerbaijan Presidential Press Services Department.

Republic Takes Over Oil Industry in 'Crisis'

*PM0912124391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
5 Dec 91 p 1*

[Report from PRAVDA-TASS-INTERFAX column under the general heading: "Newsbeat"]

[Text] The "Azerineft" state concern has been set up on the basis of the "Azneft" and "Kaspmorneftegaz" Production Associations by decree of Azerbaijan President Ayaz Mutalibov. The concern owes its origins to the alarming situation that has developed in the sector. "The policy of colonial exploitation of Azerbaijan's oil wealth over decades," the decree says, "has brought about a crisis in the republic's oil industry."

Georgia

Gamsakhurdia Urges Yeltsin to Review Relations

*LD1312174991 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1220 GMT 13 Dec 91*

[By TASS correspondent Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 13 Dec (TASS)—Zviad Gamsakhurdia has appealed to Boris Yeltsin to bring interstate relations between the republics into line with the treaty concluded by the RSFSR and the Georgian Democratic Republic (GDR) in May 1920.

Zviad Gamsakhurdia's message justifies this by stating that the tripartite agreement between Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine has abolished the Soviet Union, and Georgia is the legal successor to the GDR. This was confirmed by the recent referendum on the restoration of its state independence.

Gamsakhurdia Notes Ukrainian Recognition

AU1212150691

[Editorial Report] Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian at 1350 GMT on 12 December carries a two-minute recorded excerpt from a speech delivered by Zviad Gamsakhurdia, president of the Republic of

Georgia, to a public meeting being held today outside the Government building in Tbilisi. The announcer notes the meeting is still in progress.

Gamsakhurdia begins by saying "our struggle for the recognition of Georgia's independence has yielded the greatest result. The Ukraine, Europe's largest state, has recognized Georgia."

He goes on to say that "this is the greatest event in the life of the whole of our nation" and "our struggle for the recognition of Georgia's independence is close to victory."

He goes on to clarify that he had "a conversation with Ukrainian President Kravchuk yesterday" who "himself raised the question" and who said that it would be discussed by the Ukrainian Supreme Council Presidium today. "We had been waiting all day for the news and this happy news came.

"As regards recognition by other republics, I am currently having consultations. Meetings have begun. I will come out later and inform you of all the details connected with this happy fact. Long live independent Georgia!"

Supreme Council Note to Ukraine

LD1312100491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0952 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 13 Dec (TASS)— Georgia has recognized the independence of the Ukrainian Republic and is ready to establish diplomatic relations with it at embassy level. A note by the presidium of the Georgian Supreme Council to the Ukrainian parliament, which was published today, also speaks of its desire to develop bilateral relations in full measure and at all levels.

Gamsakhurdia Receives Envoys From U.S. Embassy

LD0812184191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2100 GMT 7 Dec 91

[Text] In Tbilisi, Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia received representatives from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. In the course of the conversation it was noted that one of the most important matters at the present time is recognition of Georgia's independence by civilized states in the world community. A broad range of economic cooperation questions were also examined at the meeting.

Gamsakhurdia Criticizes Shevardnadze at Meeting

AU1012113591 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0506 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Report on the regional conference of the Georgian Helsinki Union (National Revival) under the chairmanship of Zviad Gamsakhurdia, president of the Republic of Georgia, held in Tbilisi on 7 December]

[Text] What is today the most important thing for all the members of the Helsinki Union? To protect human rights and achieve political stability and the recognition of Georgian independence by the countries of the world, said Zviad Gamsakhurdia, chairman of the Georgian Helsinki Union (National Revival), at the regional conference of the Helsinki Union held in Tbilisi on 7 December.

Batoni [Georgian honorific] Zviad Gamsakhurdia called upon everyone to supply the population with objective information concerning the political and economic situation in Georgia by peaceful means: through rallies, meetings, and conferences. Unfortunately factors still exist that prevent the Georgian population from achieving its desired aim. We must immediately expose those forces that cover up the truth both in Georgia and outside its frontiers. Former party functionaries under the leadership of Eduard Shevardnadze have established ties with the so-called opposition and are using every means to hinder the Georgian people in the struggle for freedom and independence. However, it is clear to everyone that their attempts are doomed to failure.

Batoni Zviad Gamsakhurdia emphasized that the greatest attention must be given to the young people, to whom the future belongs and who have to live and work in a free and independent Georgia. The center is trying to take our young people away from us and has declared an opium war upon us. Criminal elements are bringing drugs into Georgia. We must bar every approach to this pernicious disease. All members of the Helsinki Union must become more active in their work and elaborate and implement every proposal that will accelerate the recognition of Georgia's independence.

Vakhtang (?Kutava), Avtandil (?Rtskhiladze), Vakhtang Bochurishvili, Varlam Nikoladze, Gogi Khutsishvili, and others participated in the debate.

Elections were held. Avtandil (?Rtskhiladze) was elected chairman of the Tbilisi regional organization. Juridical, economic, press, and other information commissions were created.

Gamsakhurdia Notes Soviet Troop 'Complaints'

LD1312111691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2021 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Text] Tbilisi, 10 Dec (TASS)—The personnel of the Soviet Armed Forces stationed in Georgia must strictly observe the decision of the Supreme Council of the republic on the transfer to its jurisdiction of the military formations, units and sub-units stationed here. Otherwise all responsibility for a future exacerbation of the situation will rest with the servicemen and their command, Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia said yesterday when he addressed personnel of the units and sub-units of the USSR Ministry of Defense, Internal Affairs and Border Troops stationed on republican territory. "Critical remarks and complaints" regarding Georgia's leadership have been voiced increasingly often in army circles of late, Gamsakhurdia noted, and gave assurances that the republic does not hold anti-Russian feelings or biased attitude toward servicemen. He called on the military to show due respect for Georgian sovereignty, and to promote law and order in places of service until the troops are completely withdrawn from republican territory.

Apparently this address was a form of reply to the statement made by Lieutenant General Yuriy Grekov, first deputy commander of troops of the Trans-Caucasian Military District, who yesterday demanded that the republican leadership return 10 tanks stolen by unidentified persons from Tbilisi railway station. The president did not mention the recent killing of Major Vladimir Berillov, or the numerous assaults on servicemen, military installations and equipment.

Gamsakhurdia Critics Stripped of Powers

PM1212113391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 6 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Untitled report from IZVESTIYA, RIA, and INTERFAX roundup]

[Text] A group of deputies from the Georgian parliament has been stripped of its powers, SNARK reported. This decision, which was "prompted" by President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, was made at the latest session of the Georgian Supreme Council.

The list of disgraced deputies includes, among others, Deputy Georgiy Khavtasi, who recently publicly accused the president of violating elementary human rights.

Law Changes Number of Supreme Council Members

AU0912112291 Tbilisi SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA in Russian 8 December 91 p 1

["Republic of Georgia Law on the Number of Members of the Republic of Georgia Supreme Council" issued in Tbilisi on 3 December]

[Text] The Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia resolves as follows:

I. To determine the number of members of the Republic of Georgia Supreme Council as 201.

II. To introduce the following changes into the Republic of Georgia Constitution:

In Article 105, the figure "205" must be replaced by the figure "201."

III. To introduce the following changes into the Republic of Georgia Law on the Elections of the Republic of Georgia Supreme Council adopted on 18 August 1990:

1. Part 2 of Article 1 must read in the following way:

"The Supreme Council is made up of 201 deputies elected for five years. Of this number, 120 are elected in single-mandate electoral districts and 81—on the basis of proportional representation from all-Georgian party lists."

2. In Article 16, the figure "125" must be replaced by the figure "120."

3. The second sentence of part 2 of Article 36 must read in the following way:

"The number of candidates on the list must be at least 81 and must not exceed 210."

4. In part 3 of Article 40, the words "125 candidates" must be replaced by the words "81 candidates."

5. In part 3 of Article 55, the figure "125" must be replaced by the figure "81."

[Signed] Zviad Gamsakhurdia, president of the Republic of Georgia.

[Dated] 3 December 1991, Tbilisi.

Council Session Halted by Commotion, Illness

AU0612153791 Tbilisi SAKARTVELOS RESPUBLIKA in Georgian 30 Nov 91 p 1

[Unattributed article: "The Meeting of the Republic of Georgia Supreme Council Session Was Postponed Due to the Illness of Supreme Council Chairman Akaki Asatiani"]

[Text] The regular meeting of the second session of the Republic of Georgia Supreme Council, which renewed its work at midday on 29 November, was postponed before discussion of the agenda even began.

Supreme Council Chairman Akaki Asatiani gave the floor to deputy Tamaz Obgadze so that he could deliver a statement. On behalf of the Merab Kostava Society, he informed the session that three members of this society had been detained by the law enforcement organs and charged with illegal possession of a large quantity of ammunition.

Republic of Georgia President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who was present at the session, explained that the process of including illegal armed formations into state structures had begun and was continuing. In particular, the president informed the deputies that the special purpose "White Eagle" battalion and the Kutaisi battalion that, until recently, had been encamped around the Tbilisi Sea, had declared their loyalty to the president. They will be located in a place specified by the authorities.

As it turned out, these young people had been disinformed by their former commanders at the time of the August putsch in Moscow with regard to the motives behind and aims of the president's decree concerning the National Guard. They learned the whole truth about all this from the president himself who met and talked with them in Gori.

Batoni [Georgian honoric] Zviad Gamsakhurdia pointed out that all the existing illegal armed groups on the territory of the Republic of Georgia should be included in official structures—whether this be the National Guard or the municipal militia—and come under the command of the official authorities and serve the interests of Georgia. Batoni president emphasized that this session should resolve the question of the remaining armed units encamped around the Tbilisi Sea. In particular, they should be confered the status of a special purpose batallion and, like all the other military units, should come under the command of the official authorities. It is only in this way that the existing problem can be resolved.

Batoni president pointed out that those armed groups belonging to the Merab Kostava Society should also be included in official structures.

Following the president's words, members of the Merab Kostava Society, deputies G. Khavtasi and V. Adamia, stated that no armed groups belong to the Merab Kostava Society. Their incorrect tone of address toward the president caused commotion in the work of the session. Deputies from various factions hurled abuse both at one another and at the work of the session. It became impossible to continue the session and a break was announced.

Batoni Akaki Asatiani was unable to take part in the session of the Presidium that was held during the break on account of a nervous disorder and was taken to hospital.

After the break, Batoni Nemo Burchuladze [deputy chairman of the Republic of Georgia Supreme Council] delivered a statement. He pointed out that Batoni Akaki Asatiani needed to undergo treatment and, given that the session had been prepared by him, it should be postponed until Tuesday.

The session adopted Batoni N. Burchuladze's proposal. The Supreme Council will resume its work on 3 December.

[Footnote] Batoni Vakhtang Khelashvili, doctor on duty at the Scientific Research Institute for Therapy informed us that Batoni Akaki Asatiani had been taken to the resuscitation department and was diagnosed as suffering from coronary ischemia and angina pectoris.

We hope that Batoni Akaki Asatiani will soon be able to resume his chairmanship of Supreme Council sessions.

Tskhinvali Officers Protest Allegations

PM1212111391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 7 Dec 91 p 2

[Report by Colonel Ivan Yesyutin: "Besieged by Arbitrariness"]

[Text] After discussing an article published in SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA 30 November 1991, a meeting of officers from the troop unit stationed in the city of Tskhinvali adopted a statement describing the newspaper article as filthy slander designed to kindle enmity and hatred among the people toward the Army and drag servicemen into the interethnic conflict.

The statement says that the newspaper's accusations that "drunken helicopter pilots" took off in their helicopters and fired on women, old people, and children rushing around in the darkness below in the village of Kvemo-Nikozi are monstrous. The unit's officers are indignant at such unpardonable lies.

What does the situation really look like? Of late the troop unit's territory and the officers' housing compound have repeatedly been fired upon and the garrison's servicemen have been subjected to insults and even humiliating searches by representatives of Georgian paramilitary formations and militia. Georgian paramilitary formations equipped with armored vehicles and mortars have been stationed right next to the unit.

Helicopters belonging to the republic's aviation associations are systematically flying through the area where the unit is based, flagrantly breaching basic safety norms and flagrantly flouting air code requirements.

Appealing to the leadership of the country and the republic, the meeting of the unit's officers expressed the hope that a careful investigation of the aforementioned facts will be carried out immediately and cardinal emergency steps will be taken to normalize the situation around the military camp. It resolved to appeal to the courts with a view to instituting proceedings against the writers of the article entitled "Samochablo: New Spiral of Violence" published by SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA. The helicopter officers have warned adventurists against attempts to encroach on the lives, honor, and dignity of servicemen and members of their families. These attempts will be resolutely stopped.

Interrepublic Affairs

Central Asia States To Join Commonwealth

LD1312080491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0742 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Ashkhabad, 13 Dec (TURKMENINFORM-TASS)—The heads of the sovereign states of Central Asia and Kazakhstan declared here this morning their readiness to become equal co-founders of a commonwealth of independent states that takes account of the interests of all of its subjects. At the end of talks that began on 12 December, they adopted a declaration on their attitude toward the agreement on a commonwealth of independent states signed last Sunday by Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine.

The document says, in particular, that "we receive with understanding the aspiration of the leaders of the republics of Belarus, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, and the Ukraine to establish independent, law-governed states, united in a commonwealth, in the place of the republics which formerly enjoyed no rights." "However," the document stresses, "the agreement on this came as a surprise to us. The process of new integration of the subjects of the former USSR on the basis of the decision of the Fifth Congress of USSR People's Deputies has reached a dead end. The Minsk initiative is positive."

The participants in the meeting believe: It is necessary to coordinate efforts to shape the commonwealth of independent states; its creation must be carried out on a lawful basis; there must be a guarantee of equal participation of the subjects of the former Union in the process of elaborating decisions and documents on the commonwealth of independent states. Also, all the states of the commonwealth which is taking shape, the declaration stresses, must be recognized as its founders and referred to in the text of the agreement as the high contracting parties.

The document notes that it is expedient, in the interests of maintaining strategic stability in the world, to ensure common control [yedinyy kontrol] over nuclear weapons and joint command [ob'yedinennoye komandovaniye] of the strategic deterrence troops and the Navy.

Declaration of Ashkhabad Meeting

LD1312141891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1245 GMT 13 Dec 91

["Declaration of Those Attending the Ashkhabad Meeting"—TASS headline]

[Text] Ashkhabad, 13 Dec (TURKMENINFORM-TASS)—The full text of the declaration adopted today at the meeting of the heads of five states is given below:

Declaration of the heads of states of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenia, and the Republic of Uzbekistan:

In accordance with the accords reached at the meetings in Alma-Ata (1990) and in Tashkent (1991), heads of states N. A. Nazarbayev, A. A. Akayev, R. N. Nabiyev, S. A. Niyazov, and I. A. Karimov gathered for a routine consultative meeting in Ashkhabad. They discussed the situation that has taken shape since the signing in Minsk of the agreement setting up a Commonwealth of Independent States. Following a comprehensive exchange of views and an analysis of the political situation, those attending the meeting declared the following:

We view with understanding the desire of the leaders of the Republic of Belarus, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, and Ukraine to create, in place of the republics that previously had no rights, independent law-governed states united to form a commonwealth. The Minsk initiative on the creation of a Commonwealth of Independent States, with the participation of Ukraine, is positive. However, this agreement came as a surprise to us.

The participants in the conference agree with the assertion that the process of new integration of the subjects of the former USSR on the basis of the decisions of the Fifth USSR Congress of People's Deputies has reached a dead end. The center's shortsighted policy has led to a profound economic and political crisis, the breakdown of production, and a catastrophic decline in the living standards of virtually all strata of society.

The participants in the meeting believe that:

—It is necessary to coordinate efforts to shape the Commonwealth of Independent States.

—The establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States must be implemented on a lawful basis.

—There must be a guarantee of equal participation by the subjects of the former Union in the process of elaborating decisions and documents on the Commonwealth of Independent States. All the states forming the commonwealth must be recognized as founders and referred to in the text of the agreement as high contracting parties.

—One should take into account in these documents, decisions, and agreements, the historic and socioeconomic realities of the republics of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, who were not considered, unfortunately, during the preparation of the agreement on a commonwealth.

—The Commonwealth of Independent States should guarantee the equality of rights of all nations and ethnic groups, and the protection of their rights and interests.

—The Commonwealth of Independent States cannot take shape on an ethnic, religious, or any other basis infringing on the rights of individuals or peoples.

—The Commonwealth of Independent States recognizes and respects the territorial integrity and inviolability of presently existing borders.

—In the interests of preserving strategic stability in the world, it is expedient to ensure common control [yedinyy kontrol] of nuclear weapons and a unified command [obyedinennoye komandovaniye] for strategic restraint troops and naval forces.

—It is essential to endorse the treaty concluded earlier on an economic community and to complete work on it in full.

Proceeding from the aforementioned, we declare our readiness to become equal cofounders of the Commonwealth of Independent States, which takes the interests of all its subjects into account. Issues involved in the Commonwealth of Independent States coming into being should be examined at a conference of the heads of the sovereign states.

The participants in the consultative meeting regard with understanding the fact that the Republic of Uzbekistan will determine its final position with regard to participation in the Commonwealth of Independent States after nationwide presidential elections are held on 29 December 1991.

The preliminary amendments and proposals agreed upon at the meeting and concerning the Minsk Commonwealth of Independent States agreement are appended to this statement.

[Signed] N.A. Nazarbayev, president of the Republic of Kazakhstan

[Signed] A.A. Akayev, president of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan

[Signed] President of Turkmenistan I.A. Karimov

[Signed] S.A. Niyazov, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

[Dated] Ashkhabad, 13 December 1991.

Participants Hold News Conference

LD1312145291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1243 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Ashkhabad, 13 Dec (TURKMENINFORM - TASS)—The new Commonwealth of Independent States cannot be formed along ethnic, religious, or any other lines that violate human rights and the rights of peoples. This is the common position of the participants in the Ashkhabad meeting which ended today. The leaders of the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan took part in it. The final document speaks, in particular, of the readiness to become equal co- founders of the Commonwealth. Speaking at the news conference held after the conclusion of the talks, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev touched on the position which Mikhail Gorbachev has come to occupy recently. He characterized it as having nothing in common with the real state of affairs. The Kazakh leader also emphasized that the meeting in Ashkhabad has become a logical link within a chain of natural events. Their development, naturally, will follow. Here Nursultan Nazarbayev referred to a telephone conversation with Boris Yeltsin who confirmed his agreement to a meeting of the commonwealth's co-founders, to be held in a town in the southern region in the near future.

Asked about the reason for the breakup of the former Union, Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev pointed to the way in which it was formed, when the principle of co-founders from below was violated to begin with. In the opinion of the Kyrgyz leader, Mikhail Gorbachev's mistake was that in his time he did not accept the almost unanimous opinion of the leaders of the sovereign republics, who inclined toward creating a state on a confederative basis. Gorbachev is not even supporting them now, when this opinion has in effect grown into the expression of the will of the peoples, he stated. At the same time Akayev did not rule out the possibility of further participation by Gorbachev in the new processes.

Uzbek President Islam Karimov, in his reply to questions from journalists, singled out the necessity of soon strengthening the positive and creative role of the work which has begun to reform interstate relations on fundamentally new bases. He stressed that the main aim that is now held in common is to develop the economy. In this, consideration should be given to what was made the basis of the economic agreement reached earlier by the eight republics of the former union. Islam Karimov also described the Minsk agreement as basically very positive, noting that there are no objective reasons preventing the independent states of the commonwealth from building their relations on the basis of mutual respect and self-respect. However, he frankly admitted that some doubts still remain as to whether they will manage to end for ever the secondary role which has long been allocated to the Central Asian region as a producer of raw materials. Whatever happens, the Uzbek leader stressed, we are going to strive together to create living conditions that will allow the citizens of all nationalities to live in peace, prosperity, and harmony.

Tajik President Rakhman Nabiyev and Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov also spoke of their adherence to these principles.

Nazarbayev, Karimov, Akayev Comment

OW1312125691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1119 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have expressed their republics' readiness to join the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] as co-founders.

Uzbekistan promised to finalize its stand on the matter after the end of presidential elections on December 29.

The five presidents announced that at Friday's [13 December] news conference in Ashkhabad summing up their talks on Thursday and Friday. They coordinated a number of preliminary corrections and suggestions concerning the Commonwealth agreement signed in Brest by Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine.

The five leaders emphasized that the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan would be ready to join the Commonwealth "only with the status of full-fledged and equal co-founders."

When President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan contacted Boris Yeltsin on the telephone to check the possibility of obtaining such a status, he heard the Russian leader's "yes" to the five republic's request.

The Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev said he had been informed of the conference in Brest but had never expected the Russian, Belarussian and Ukrainian presidents to work out an agreement like the one on forming a trilateral alliance. He said he had been ready from the outset to join the Commonwealth, but had been unwilling to do so before checking out the Central Asian republic's stand on the matter.

Mr. Karimov described the five presidents' suggestions concerning the Commonwealth agreement as "reflecting the development specifics of the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan."

Asked if the Ukraine could secede from the Commonwealth if the latter were joined by most of the other ex-Soviet republics, Mr. Nazarbayev said it would be unlikely to do so, which he had gathered from telephone conversations with the Ukrainian leader L. Kravchuk.

The Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev stressed the point that the republican leaders had insisted, as early as during their conference at Novo-Ogarevo, on forming a union of sovereign states, not a federal state. According to Mr. Akayev, the new Commonwealth and the five presidents' statement opened up new horizons for all the sovereign republics. "Mikhail Gorbachev could be offered a post in the Commonwealth, which provision we wrote down into the documents we signed," he said, but added that "everything will depend on Gorbachev himself."

The five presidents expressed satisfaction with the fact that the founders of the Commonwealth rejected the idea of forming a purely Slavic alliance.

The Ashkhabad conference confirmed the inviolability of the present inter-republican borders.

Guided by their desire to maintain worldwide strategic stability, the leaders of the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan called for centralized control over nuclear weapons and the joint command of strategic deterrence forces and the Navy.

Further on Central Asian Meeting in Ashkhabad

Leaders' Attitudes Viewed

LD1212185491 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Excerpts] As reported by the press service of the President of Turkmenistan Saparmurad Niyazov, a meeting of the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan is planned in Ashkhabad today. It is proposed that the Minsk agreement between Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine is to be discussed. Over to our commentator, Yuriy Melikhov:

[Melikhov] In fact the main issue at the Ashkhabad meeting is whether these states will agree to join the triple alliance. In this connection, it seems to me that the positions of their leaders are of interest. In the main they are already known. On the whole the reaction to the Minsk accord may be described as a sufficiently loyal one, although it is a cautious one. There are, however, substantial differences as well in which it seems to me that ideological motives are not the last consideration. [passage omitted]

I personally did not notice a Slavonic accent in the documents. However, President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan did perceive an ethnic motif in them, although his reaction on the whole can in no way be called a negative one. The opposite is more likely the case. The agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States is of an evolutionary nature, he stated. I welcome the agreement because it is built on the right basis. At the same time, in the opinion of Islam Karimov, three elements remain unclear. First, the problem of the Army into which youths from other republics are conscripted and continue to serve. Second, how the concept of a common economic space unfolds. And third, the problem of currency. The president of Uzbekistan believes that one must sit down and discuss all the unclear points in the presence of the leaders of Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine and come to some kind of solution.

Nursultan Nazarbayev, the president of Kazakhstan, unlike his colleagues, is opposed to the Slavonic accent. One should not speculate on those confrontations between the Slav and Asiatic republics, he said. Nazarbayev noted that he did not see anything supernatural in the Minsk agreement. A confederative union of states is quite possible. Nazarbayev's positions, however, remain evasive. Speaking in the Kazakhstan parliament, he said that the decisions adopted by the leaders of the three republics are extremely unexpected and too serious to make a categorical assessment immediately following them. Kazakhstan should, however, be ready for any turn of events. We are in a position to live independently, Nursultan Nazarbayev stressed.

The leadership of Kyrgyzia, which stated yesterday that it would join the Commonwealth of Independent States, occupied the most resolute position. Yesterday, the republic's President Askar Akayev spoke at the Supreme Soviet of Kyrgyzia where his inauguration ceremony was conducted. Our correspondent in Bishkek, Talan Zhumabayev, gives us an account of the president's inaugyral speech:

[Zhumabayev] In particular he stated that he has an attitude of understanding and the greatest respect toward the commonwealth that the leaders of the three Slav states have inaugurated. I have always believed, Akayev stated, that the fate of the Union should be and can be decided precisely by the three Slav states. He reported to the deputies that way back last year, he requested Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev to assemble the leaders of the three Slav republics to make their positions clear, and then the rest of the republics would express their attitude to the new Union. I am convinced, said Akayev, that sooner or later the fate of the Union should be decided by the three Slav states.

And here is another thing: I think, Akayev said, that our people will perceive this fact correctly and will regard it with respect, because good political, economic, and humanitarian mutual relations have formed between Kyrgyzstan and all the Slav republics. There is no other way for us except to strengthen these mutual relations in the future.

[Announcer] I shall not anticipate the outcome of the meeting of presidents. I shall, however, dwell on one or two important elements. Objectively, participation in the commonwealth of the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan is a necessity, first and foremost for economic motives. It is hardly likely that the republics will be able to cope with the crisis individually, irrespective of the resources they possess—and if they do manage to cope, then at a much higher price. But there is yet another element: The leaders of neighboring China have repeatedly stated their claims to the extremely extensive territory of Central Asia and they consider Alma-Ata to be an age-old Chinese town. And I am not sure that once they are left face to face with their mighty neighbor, these republics will be able to defend their sovereignty to a sufficient extent. I think that it is worth the presidents paying attention to this consideration as well.

And here is the last thing: The center is in no way present at the Ashkhabad meeting, just as it did not attend the Minsk meeting.

On 14 December President Yeltsin intends to meet with the leaders of these republics in Alma-Ata, again directly with them, without the participation of the center, or specifically Gorbachev. All of this looks like evidence of the fact that if they have not given up the Union structures for lost, the republics of the former Union do at least see it not in a primary, but in the secondary role. Different points of view exist on the account, moreover. Some analysts consider that for the moment we cannot get along without the existing Union structures. [passage omitted]

Leaders' Stances Cited

OW1212234891 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1450 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In an interviev with IF [INTERFAX] Tajikistan's President Rakhmon Nabiyev said that his republic has always favored a commonwealth of states. However, he noted that for the moment it is hard to say what it would be like. Mr Nabiyev arrived in Ashkhabad, the capital of Turkmenistan, Thursday, to meet with the leaders of the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan. He pointed out that it is still too early to consider Tajikistan's membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

"We have always lived together as parts of the Union. Our republics are linked economically and interdependent upon each other and it would be very hard for them to overcome the crisis on their own. However, the question of setting up a new union should be thoroughly discussed," Mr Nabiyev noted.

Before his departure for Ashkhabad he spoke at a meeting of chairmen of the city, regional and district executive committees in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan. He described the process of unification of the former Union republics as positive, but criticized the creation of a new commonwealth according to ethnic, religious or some other principle.

—Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov who has also arrived in Ashkhabad for the meeting told reporters that the leaders of the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan intend to discuss the whole range of the region's problems, in particular, a draft Union of Sovereign States, as well as documents concerning the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. "I personally prefer the agreement signed in Minsk, though it has some controversial articles," the Uzbek leader pointed out.

—Kyrgyzstan's President Askar Akayev told reporters at the Ashkhabad airport that he has no intention of changing his views and position. "I have repeatedly stated that the most acceptable form of the sovereign republics' unification is a commonwealth of nations. I spoke about that even before the United Nations Organization," he stressed.

Karimov Interviewed on Meeting

LD1212180191 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1630 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] As is known, the leaders of the independent republics of Central Asia and Kazakhstan are meeting in Ashkhabad today. Prior to his departure by air for the Turkmenian capital, Islam Karimov, president of the Republic of Uzbekistan, gave an interview to our correspondent in Tashkent:

[Begin recording] [Correspondent Sh. Ganiyeva] Would you please tell us your attitude to the new agreement of the three independent states, the largest republics of the former Union, and tell us, please, what thoughts you are taking with you as you fly now to Ashkhabad?

[Karimov] The three states—Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine—have decided to create a unified system of absolutely equal states which will not be under pressure from the center. Here lies the difference between that union of sovereign states which Gorbachev proposed and the union [as heard] of independent states which the three states have proposed. And we are reassured by the fact that we received satisfactory answers to all the questions that we put to the leaders of these three states. I think that in Ashkhabad, where we shall be meeting the leaders of the four states—Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan—we shall come to an understanding on determining common positions. But I can say in advance that we react with understanding to this union, and we think that we shall be a part of it.

[Ganiyeva] Islam Abduganiyevich, agreements—interstate and trade and economic—have been concluded between Uzbekistan, Russia, Belarus, and the Ukraine. Will they operate in the new political conditions?

[Karimov] The point is that the main thing which attracts us, and which reassures us in this union, is that there is a commitment by these three states to preserve all the agreements that were signed earlier. We shall definitely be joining this union. [end recording]

Akayev Confirms Stance

LD1212[illegible]0991 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1630 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] Ashkhabad Airport has been receiving the leaders of the neighboring republics according to all the rules of international etiquette. This emphasized that the heads of sovereign states, each of which has its own attitude to the question under discussion, will be holding talks among themselves.

[Correspondent K. Babayev] The Ashkhabad meeting can by no means be considered as a challenge or opposition to the commonwealth formed by the Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus. However, the haste with which the document was signed by the leaders of these states was unexpected by many—the more so since it has appeared at a time when discussion of the draft treaty on the creation of a Union of Sovereign States, evolved by the USSR State Council, is beginning in the republics' parliaments.

Aksar Akayevich [Akayev], you are the first of the Central Asian leaders to support the newly formed commonwealth. Will you be defending this point of view here in Ashkhabad?

[Akayev] Well, I never change stands once they have been taken. I have expressed respect, understanding, and respect [as heard] for that commonwealth founded by the leaders of the Slavic states and I stand by this.

[Babayev] Our crew managed to film the arrival of the presidents of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan. This evening, when the compilation of this material was already in full swing, a plane from Alma-Ata arrived with President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan. Late this evening, the first working conference of the meeting was held. It took place in the palace of the president of Turkmenistan. Tomorrow the participants will hold a press conference and the meeting's first results will be summarized.

Kazakhstan

President Issues Decrees on Tariffs, Salaries

LD1212234391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1735 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By KAZTAG correspondent Konstantin Borodinov: "Decrees of the President of Kazakhstan"]

[Text] Alma-Ata, 12 Dec (TASS)—Decrees aimed at increasing the social protection of the population were issued today by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

From 15 December, the scales of existing tariff rates and salaries of employees in organizations and establishments of health, education, culture, science, law-enforcement bodies, the courts, bodies of state power, and other organizations financed by the budget will be increased by 90 percent in the republic.

A procedure for the sale of foodstuffs by coupons and indentification cards, and non-foodstuffs by passports is being introduced in the republic.

The export of goods in excess of volumes stipulated by interstate agreements outside Kazakhstan is prohibited.

Defense Official Favors Joint Armed Forces

OW1212063491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2044 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The chairman of Kazakh state defence committee Lieutenant-General Sagadat Nurmagambetov thinks that the territory of the former USSR should be defended by joint armed forces. Only with this principle, he said, the republics "would be able to rebuff any aggression." He was giving an interviev to the newspaper KAZAKHSTAN PRAVDA published Dec [December] 11. Referring to President Nursultan Nazarbayev the general said further that Kazakhstan was also for keeping a single strategic defence space in the USSR. The republic's leadership finds that strategic armed forces should have joint commandment with a defence minister and General Staff. "Kazakhstan has no need to control the nuclear button", remarked S. Nurmagambetov and stressed his republic opposed moving nuclear arms from place to place.

Miners Strike Over Falling Living Standards

OW1312054591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2027 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The coal miners of Karaganda have again gone on strike. The Tentek, Steppnaya, and other mines are at a standstill. The KAZAKHSTAN PRAVDA reports with reference to the economist of the Karagandaugol company V. Chaiku that the miners are tired of queuing for hours at the savings bank for their hard-earned wages, while their wives do the same in the shops for the rations. They are angered by the galloping prices for food and consumer goods outstripping by far their incomes. They demand a labor contract to be signed between their trade union and the republic's leadership.

Kyrgyzstan

President Sworn In, Comments on 'Crisis'

LD1112210191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1400 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Text] Askar Akayev was sworn in today as president of Kyrgyzstan. In his policy speech he confirmed his allegiance to reform. Speaking on ways out of the crisis, he noted that they must be closely linked to the republic's sovereignty. In reality, we are not yet a sovereign republic, said Akayev. Kyrgyzstan to this day is deprived of foreign exchange, a gold reserve, and a national guard, and it remains part of a state that has fallen apart.

Akayev Views Commonwealth With 'Understanding'

LD1212051591 Moscow TASS in English 1558 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Text] Bishkek December 11 TASS—President-elect Askar Akayev, the first to be elected in a free and fair public election, was sworn in a ceremony here today after making a political statement at the current session of the Republic parliament.

Akayev confirmed his commitment to reforms and said his foreign policy will give no ground to doubts. He also reiterated allegiance to the recently signed economic union treaty and confederation.

"We view with understanding and respect the commonwealth founded by the leaders of three (Slavic) republics," Akayev said. "They had mandates from their peoples for the move. The question remains though what union Kyrgyzstan should join. It is up to you, people's deputies to replay to this question."

Economic policy is senseless if it doesn't have an outlet into social policy, Akayev pointed out. He stressed the chief objective of policy was to revive the national spirit, culture and history of all peoples residing in the Republic. This objective can only be attained through joint efforts on the basis of mutual understanding and respect, he said.

Economic, Cultural Ties Created With Pakistan

BK0912164691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] Pakistan and the Central Asian Republic of Kyrgyzstan have agreed to develop bilateral economic and cultural ties. The two sides signed a number of agreements in the capital city of Bishkek during the recent visit of a high-level Pakistani delegation to the republic so as to bring the two countries closer. During a meeting with the president of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, Pakistani delegation leader Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali had assured that Islamabad was willing to support the republic in acquiring membership of all forums. The Kyrgyz president said his country wants to benefit from Pakistan's technical and administrative expertise. In response to Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif's invitation to visit Pakistan, the Kyrgyz president expressed the hope that Pakistan will be the first country he will visit after the completion of the referendum on total independence of the republic to be held by the end of this year. He also invited the prime minister to visit the Republic of Kyrgyzstan.

Parliament To Discuss Commonwealth Agreement

OW1212131191 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1208 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Though on the whole Kyrgyzstan supports the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, this does not mean that it is ready to join it immediately. The statement was made by the Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev in his Thursday [12 December] speech in parliament.

"The Slavic community is a fact and it cannot be overlooked", Akayev said. Kyrgyzstan has close and diverse ties with the Slavic states and these ties should be maintained."

"On the other hand, will Kyrgyzstan be bound to enter a Central Asian Commonwealth, if it is formed?" the president wondered.

There is also the third possibility, Akayev said. It is quite possible that Kyrgyzstan will not enter any commonwealth or union, but will remain a neutral country like Switzerland having friendly relations with all states.

Akayev stressed that he did not try to impose his opinion on the MPs.

The attitude to the Commonwealth will be discussed in the Kyrgyz parliament after Akayev's return from Ashkhabad where the leaders of Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan are holding a conference on Thursday.

Tajikistan

Movement for Democratic Reforms Organized

PM1212115391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 6 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Aleksandr Karpov report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Democrats From the Mountains Are Not Surrendering"]

[Text] Dushanbe—Despite losing the presidential election, Tajikistan's democrats do not consider themselves defeated.

This was the proposition at a session of the republic's association of democratic forces that has been held. Statistics from the recent election campaign testify that one-third of the adult population in the mountain region support ideas of democratic transformation. The figure is impressive if we bear in mind that the republic's opposition parties and movements began their activity only quite recently. In this connection it was stressed that prestige and influence can only be increased through a future consolidation of efforts.

Those attending the session formed an organizational committee to stage a republic founding congress of the Movement for Democratic Reforms [MDR]. USSR People's Deputy D. Khudonazarov was made chairman of it. It is intended that representatives of the Tajikistan Democratic Party, the "Rastokhez" People's Front, the Islamic Revival Party, and supporters of the "Communists for Democracy" Movement will take part in the congress. The composition of the Tajik delegation to the country's MDR congress was also settled at the session.

Compromise Reached on Pamir Political Status

LD1112071691 Moscow TASS in English 1031 GMT 10 Dec 91

[By TAJIKTA correspondent Galina Gridneva—TASS]

[Text] Horog (Gorno-Badakhshan Region, Tajikistan) December 10 TASS—The authorities of the city of Horog in the Pamir Mountains of Tajikistan have succeeded in reaching a compromise with local residents demanding independence and the recalling of their deputies from Tajik parliament.

The authorities decided late on Monday [9 December] to raise the status of their autonomous region, proclaiming it a republic inside Tajikistan. They said they forwarded their decision to the Tajik republican parliament for approval.

A general election to establish a leader for the new Gorno- Badakhshan Republic can take place only after the republican Supreme Soviet approves the new status of the region, the authorities promised.

But they told the meeting in Horog, organised by the "Lali Badakhshan" public movement, elected MPs [members of parliament] can be recalled only by voters and not by the decision of a political rally. The protesters claimed the deputies "do not express the true interests of Pamir highlanders".

The protesters said they are satisfied with the compromise and ended the meeting.